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LAFAYETTE,

THE COUNTESS OF FOWIS AND LORD CLIVE.

Dublin



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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By a regrettable oversight Dr. Francis Ward was not given credit for the excellent photographs which illustrated his article on "Trout Life" in last week's COUNTRY LIFE.

** The supplement which appears in the present issue will be of interest to many of our readers.

THE MODERN . . HOMESTEAD.

AT no time in the year more than in autumn do the shortcomings of the old-fashioned farm buildings press on the farmer. He is then in a position to test their capacity to the full, and very seldom indeed has he cause to be satisfied. Most likely the homestead was erected to suit a state of things altogether unlike what exists to-day. Take, for example, the typical buildings put up to meet the requirements of a holding devoted to mixed husbandry, the character of a majority of holdings of to-day. A certain amount of grain is produced, but probably it is only half what it used to be, and the means of housing it are on quite a disproportionate scale. The stackyard is too large, though that does not matter, since the space can always be utilised in various ways. In the size of the granary and straw-barn the waste is much more apparent. Large granaries are little needed in days when corn goes to market so quickly after harvest. Connected with these is probably some remnant of an obsolete thrashing machine and the power that propelled it, the remains of a dam across the brook, mossed over like a piece of antiquity, an unused sluice, the fragments of a wheel may attest to the rough adaptation of old buildings to new farming. Landlords have not been in a position to pull down and rebuild for many years, and so the tenant has to make the best he can of what he has. But where a new homestead has to be erected, how easy it would be to economise in these particulars, even without any sacrifice of efficiency. For the thrashing apparatus can be wholly dispensed with, the water may be drained

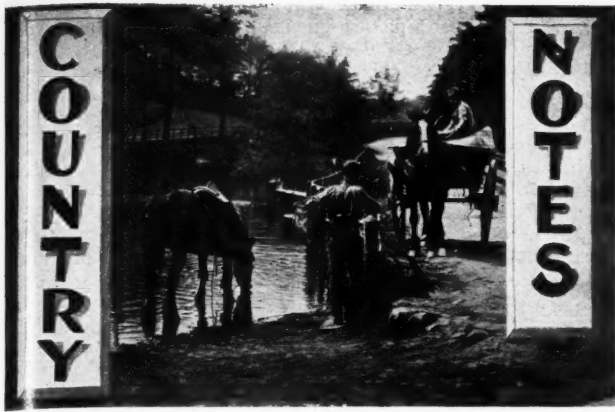
from the pond, and the land turned into cottage gardens. A small compact granary is all that is needed, and the straw-barn should stand in proximity to the room which contains the chaffer and similar machines. The actual work of thrashing is done by a travelling steamer, and it is a saving of time and labour to build the stacks in the fields when they are not destined to stand long.

Mixed husbandry is bound to include some branch of cattle feeding, and it is in the building devoted to this purpose that improvement is most needed. Our forefathers had not a rudimentary idea of the value of hygiene, and the sort of cow-house they built might have been calculated for the express purpose of developing tuberculosis. That is to say, the removal of sewage was not arranged for, and every access was denied to air, so that the animals stood all winter in hot, evil-smelling, over-crowded byres. Luckily they were in the midst of the country, and obtained a breath of fresh air when they went out to drink, while every time the door was opened a whiff of purifying wind was admitted. Modern science, however, declares in no uncertain tone that over-crowding is fatal to health and development, that ventilation is as necessary in a cowhouse as in a human dwelling, and that if cleanliness be not attended to the atmosphere becomes poison-laden. Again, a century or more ago labour never seemed to have been an item thought worthy of consideration, and stalls, etc., were arranged just as if each cow were to be attended to without regard to the others, that is to say, it was not taken into account that the feeder should be able to pass quickly from one to another of all the animals under his care. No doubt a wideawake, clever farmer is often able to adapt things very ingeniously to suit his methods, but in a great many cases effective and expeditious work is not possible in these old buildings. Again, when turnip-cutters, chaff-cutters, and other machines of a similar kind were introduced it was customary to turn them all by hand, and therefore they got stuck about at all points of the farm. It is as easy for a man to turn a wheel in one place as it is in another. But the modern farmer cannot afford to employ all this manual labour. He has a gas engine, and no doubt will in a few years' time have a motor that he wants to do the whole of this work, and a well-equipped farm will have a room specially intended to hold the various machines.

Closely connected with the accommodation of cattle is the management of manure, and here again our ideas have greatly changed. Most of the old yards were fully exposed to the elements, and in consequence the liquid manure was washed away by rain, to the detriment of the residue. Modern science favours a covered yard, while on some farms a tramline has been constructed, by means of which the manure is carted out directly to the fields. This, however, is more convenient in the case of stables and dairy cowsheds than for feeding cattle. Just at this moment, when the process of "finishing" for Christmas is in progress, it must be most irritating to find the work impeded by the ill-considered arrangement of the buildings. The whole question is one well worthy of the consideration of architects, who so far have not been in the habit of giving special attention and study to the erection of farm buildings, which, nevertheless, is an important branch of the art. Success must depend less on technical accomplishment than on a knowledge of the needs of the farm. Utility here is of the first importance, and as machinery and labour-saving contrivances come still more into use, still greater changes will become necessary. At the same time, it need not be divorced from a certain comeliness, if not absolute beauty. As far as dairies go this is in the way of being recognised already, and the model dairies on many estates are not only convenient and well arranged, but extremely pretty also. Where a home farm is being built it should be a special object to combine usefulness with a good appearance. It happens with more frequency than should be that the home farm is erected anyhow. The owner does not trouble much, and the architect does not consider it affords room for a good display of his art. Yet very often this gives tone to the estate. Farmers are naturally inclined to look for perfection in what is done for the landlord, and where he has studied to combine neatness, economy, and efficiency, the home farm is in itself a kind of education. But all over the manor it will be found economical in the true sense to put up buildings that are thoroughly suited to modern requirements and yet not erected with prodigal disregard of expense.

Our Portrait Illustrations.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Countess of Powis and her eldest son, Lord Clive. She was married in 1890, and is the daughter of the twelfth Baron Conyers. The country seats of the Earl of Powis are Powis Castle, Welshpool; Walcot, Lydbury North, Shropshire; and Styche, Market Drayton. On another page we publish a portrait of Lady Victoria Marjorie Harriet Manners, the eldest daughter of the Marquess of Granby.



ACCIDENTALLY and suddenly M. Zola has been removed from our midst. He was at the moment of his death the most prominent figure among novelists, perhaps it might be said the most prominent figure in contemporary literature. It is impossible to sum up his career in a sentence. He was a naturalist, and he founded a school of naturalism and exerted a great influence over the whole world of letters, which was not the less felt because the defects of his methods stared the onlooker in the face. Lacking the *esprit*, the wit, and gaiety characteristic of his countrymen, and despising the romantic style of Dumas, he went to work as though determined by sheer weight of industry to get his world on paper. It was at the end an erotic, squalid collection of moving figures that he dealt with, but yet even the reader least in sympathy with his aims recognised that here was a writer looking out on the world with his own eyes and drawing men and women as he saw them. Nor in such novels as "Le Débâcle" or "La Terre" was there wanting a certain epical cohesion. Indeed, he deliberately refrained very often from putting into a novel all he might have done, as witness the fine idyllic vein that he used so sparingly.

In the Dreyfus business M. Zola showed at least that when it came to a critical point he was able to keep his own interests in the background. He had nothing whatever to gain by his championship of Dreyfus, but much to lose. Quite consciously he staked the chance of being elected to the Academy and thus realising the ambition of his life, his popularity with the upper circles of France, and some of his most important private friendships, merely that he might give expression to an honest opinion. No doubt his methods were rather more theatrical than we admire in this country, but his sturdy honesty was a quality that was thoroughly appreciated. And this was not altered by the knowledge that racial feeling actuated him to some extent. Those who least admire the Hebrews' gradual intrusion into the world of politics and finance nevertheless recognise the sturdiness with which they stand shoulder to shoulder.

In their *pose* as simple countrymen unacquainted with the niceties of diplomacy and anxious only to secure what they can for their injured fellow-countrymen, the Boer Generals appear in the way of sowing dissension. Their manifesto was bad from every point of view. Even Continental journalists who used to repeat the slanders of Dr. Leyds are reminding them that they will meet with a cold reception if they go hat in hand to their professed friends. What chance have they of obtaining by voluntary subscription one-third of the £3,000,000 offered by England as a free gift? Then their approach to the Emperor William is in the nature of an attempt to induce him to take up an unfriendly attitude to this country. He cannot recognise private British subjects, and their oath of allegiance makes them nothing more nor less, as representatives of an independent State. That is now masquerade pure and simple. It is very evident that the Boers have not lost their "slimness," and that we shall have to act on the warnings issued by Mr. Chamberlain and repeated by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.

The Board of Agriculture has issued a very useful pamphlet on the purchase of feeding-stuffs that graziers should obtain and study carefully, though no doubt the work is to some extent done for them when they are members of a combination organised for buying purposes. Even then it will be of use for them to master the very clear analysis sent out by the Department. Take linseed, for example. It is coming largely into use as a substitute for the butter fat extracted from skimmed milk employed to feed calves, as the oil, of which it should contain from 34 to 38 per cent., is very easily digestible. But the meal is very easily adulterated either with ground linseed cake, which does not contain more than from one-sixth to one-third of the oil in pure linseed, or with the meal of

almost any cereal grain, in which case the mixture is usually worth from £6 to £12 a ton, whereas genuine linseed is worth £20. The small farmer, if he does not belong to an association, is very liable to have one palmed off on him as the other. Most likely he cannot pay ready money and dare not be too critical. He looks out for what is cheap, and he does not understand what to search for in the way of an adulterant.

We scarcely recognised in this country to what an extent the development of agriculture in South Africa depends upon oxen. The quarter of a million British soldiers who had to be fed during the war, added to the Boers themselves, whose cattle-breeding was temporarily stopped, depleted the stores of cattle completely. Yet South African agriculture depends on the ox. He is the national beast of burden, and as sixteen are required for the haulage of a waggon, it will be easy to see how essential is the possession of a large stock. This is to say nothing of the dairy, from which a large portion of the food supply comes. Very slowly is this state of things being remedied. We are sending from England a certain number of our finest pedigree cows and bulls, but they are obviously designed only for the more favoured estates. Working cattle will have to be obtained nearer home.

It is to be hoped that the exhibition at Cork was visited by a tolerable number of English farmers, since it showed to an extraordinary extent what is capable of being done by efficient technical instruction accompanied by organisation. In the fruit-drying part was a show of dried mixed vegetables occupying but a square yard of superficial space, and yet containing a ration for an army corps of 40,000 men. Much valuable and ingenious machinery was also shown. It included a pea-sheller that will shell fourteen tons in ten hours. In other respects the show was an interesting testimony to the advance made by the co-operative movement, and also by the gardening and orchard societies of Ireland.

In the Northern parts of Scotland the case with the harvest begins to look rather serious. There is little sign of the corn ripening, and already some farmers are beginning to cut it in the green state, to feed their stock, lest they lose both straw and corn. With the coming of October in these parts there is reason to apprehend an early fall of snow, and if this comes and the crops are still uncut there is no chance of saving them. In the meanwhile, except for occasional days of sunshine, the influences required to turn the oats to their ripe golden yellow are conspicuously absent, and days grow shorter and hot sunshine becomes less likely. Root crops are good everywhere, with the exception of potatoes, in which there is much disease. The oat crop and the potato crop are the stand-by, and almost the only stand-by, of many of the crofter population, and if these fail them their case is very hard.

Lord Selborne, in unveiling a monumental tablet recording a visit of Queen Victoria to Woolmer Forest, referred to three standard books dealing with that little-known and delightful district. Mr. W. W. Capes's "Memorials of the Parish of Bramshott," is the last contribution to the literature of the Forest. Bramshott is the great parish on the Hindhead side, corresponding to the even larger parish of Selborne on the east, and Mr. Capes, its rector, was the Regius Professor of Ancient History at Oxford. His book is, as might be expected, a very valuable local work. Cobbett's rural rides contain some excellent accounts of the district; and, lastly, White of Selborne writes much of Woolmer, the greater part of which was in his parish. These facts are noted again here in the hope that some day an even more lasting monument to the late Queen may be created, by the conversion of Woolmer from a Crown Forest, into a National Forest, in trust for the country for ever.

In this year of disappointment in yields of game, fruit, and fish, a cheerful report comes at the very end of the season in which the results of Nature's workshop can be estimated. The Colchester Corporation made one of their solemn visits to their municipal oyster-beds last week to examine the culch on which the spat is shed. The culch is the mass of old shells, stones, etc., and on which the spat falls, and to which the young oysters fix themselves. The enormous quantities of spat dredged up from different lengths of the river have never been equalled for twenty-one years, and the quality of the mature oysters is said to be very fine in the opinion of experts. It may not be known that fatness and quality do not always go together in oysters. But when this is the case, as at Colchester, the results are most satisfactory. Some of the fattest, and by no means the least agreeable, oysters are grown in a creek called the Butley River, a tributary of the Suffolk Ore. They become so bulky and generally well-liking in a little time that they might be supposed to be a particular breed of oyster. It is the rich water which causes this growth, for the oysters are brought to be fattened from America.

It has been, and is, a poor season for the grouse, compared with the two that have preceded it, but for the black game it appears even less good. Their numbers are not quite so easily judged as those of the grouse, because of their woodland habitat and their more elusive habits. Moreover, we do not plan regular campaigns against them as often as against the grouse. But enough has been seen to make it obvious that the cold and wet spring has killed them off. The fact is, and it is a fact hard to realise, when we see the strength of an old blackcock's flight, and his invulnerability to gun shot, except at the easiest ranges, that the young of the black game really are more delicate and less able to withstand severe weather than the young of the grouse. One is always sorry to see a failure of black game, even a comparative failure, for though they do not make the bag they make a very good addition to it. And they are fine birds. The season when their want will be most felt is just at hand—the season for beating up the woods on the fringe of the moor for black game, roe-deer, pheasants, and whatever they may hold—a pleasant mixed day of which the blackcocks are a great feature.

There still is a lack, in the records of the year's stalking, of heavy stags. Without doubt there is a general deterioration in process, which only the drastic measures taken in certain forests have been able to check; but this year it appears that the deer have been especially slow in getting into really good condition. It is very possible that the constant wetness of the grass may be the cause of this. It is almost certain that the wet grass does not help the deer to put on condition and weight as well as a drier, harder diet. They seldom do well in a very wet summer.

MIST.

Where grey and cold the rain-swift river flows
The white mist fills the woodland, weaving close
With magic webbing fine
Wet boughs of oak and pine.

No wind stirs in the branches, and no sound
Escapes the nets of silence, set around
The forest till it seems
Th' enchanted wood of dreams.

While, rising o'er the valley crest unseen,
The pale moon thrills the haze with hovering sheen,
And ghostly shadows move
Down every haunted grove.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON.

A correspondent writes: "The crane is, if tradition is correct, one of the lost birds of England, though it appears from time to time as a rare visitor. But though it no longer nests here, and very rarely alights on our soil, it possibly passes over when migrating without being noticed. I am fairly certain that a body of cranes passed over the Thames near Clifton Hampden on September 6th, and I have been hoping that someone else might have seen this flock and noted its unusual appearance. I had been informed that some flocks of wild geese had been already seen migrating, which is possible, and being on the river opposite Burcote, and the evening at 6 p.m. unusually bright and still, I looked up into the sky to see if any birds were passing over. There I saw, at no very great height up, nineteen large birds flying steadily due south, in a perfectly straight course. They were arranged in order in a very flat inverted V, and had exactly the flight of the crane. A heron flying over, though a good deal lower, also gave a standard of size to judge by. From another point of view it is difficult to think what they could have been if they were not cranes. They were not geese, or herons, and were much too large for curlew or stone plover. As many cranes nest in Lapland, it is always possible that some cross England while going south, though the greater number go over Brabant. I have been hoping that someone else might have seen the birds and recorded their impressions."

One reason for the fewness of Thames trout may be found in the abundance of Thames otters. Not that the otters catch these trout in the Thames. They kill them long before they become Thames trout at all, in the tributary streams and brooks, whence the normal supply of trout is derived as the larger fish drop down to the big river. Otters, as most people know, prefer, if possible, to hunt up a tributary, going up it by night, and returning in the morning, or else sleeping in a hollow willow, and coming back the next night. In some of the Thames tributaries they seem to clear out nearly all the fish. Where the water is fairly deep, the banks narrow, and weeds few, trout have absolutely no chance against an otter. In a chain of pools miles away from the Thames otters have recently killed about a hundred brace of trout, and left perhaps ten brace. It was a mystery where they came from, for the ponds were only connected with the Thames by a brook which gave no cover for miles. A few weeks ago the question was solved. A fine otter was found killed by a train

on the Great Western opposite the chain of ponds formed by old ballast-holes, rather a picturesque series of pools, which everyone must have noticed on the down line after leaving Didcot. These isolated ponds are not far from an old disused canal, from which the otter could gain access to all the brooks coming from the downs.

The need for a proper study of the working of dew-ponds, in which water is obtained from the dews and mists, is strongly emphasised by reports of a most serious water famine on and near the Chilterns. The area most affected lies high upon these hills, from Wendover to Amersham. For years the wells have been slowly drying up and the level of water in the chalk falling. In the past month more wells have run dry, and it is reported that even in the valley of Great Missenden only two wells are giving water. On the hills round the position is most serious and the difficulty of watering stock enormous. It may be added that this want of water has so affected agricultural land on the Oxfordshire side of the Chilterns that some properties are being offered at under £10 an acre, though with good houses on them. Why not, then, try dew-ponds? The tops of chalk downs are just suited for them. They gather water from the dews and fogs in a way quite unexplained but very practical. In one of the very few recent contributions to the knowledge of these ponds it was shown that four nights of summer fog gave over four inches of water, and recently it was noted that a dew-pond fed by vapours gained more water than a "catchment" pond fed by rain coming from a roadway. Of course the latter is only a very rough statement, but it is suggestive.

Extremely interesting is the exhibition of the Royal Photographic Society now being held in the New Gallery. Much of it, as a matter of course, is subject matter for the comment of experts, but the visit of the writer of this note was that of a simple member of the British public, who judges purely of the effect and knows nothing of the means used to produce it. From this point of view at least one criticism is unavoidable, and it is that some of the mere pictorial photographs were almost too fine. The artist seemed so intent on securing beauty that he had landed himself in pretty prettiness. Obviously a number of the landscapes especially were made up of bits from various places and lacked the touch of homeliness that a good painter knows to be essential. Something of the same kind may be said about the photographs. A few are really excellent—that is to say, the artist had waited patiently for a characteristic expression, had in fact studied his model as a fine portrait painter would do. But the great majority evidently place their trust in mere *pose*, a most ineffectual method compared with that which relies on a sympathetic reading and rendering of character. In fact, it was borne in on one with great force that the first and greatest qualification of a good photographer is that he himself should first see the picture, whether it be that of a landscape or of a human being.

A department of photography not represented as well as it should be was that of natural history—we mean the natural outdoor sort. One kind of study that we hoped to see was one of living butterflies. The American photographers profess to have got pictures of this kind, and we see no insurmountable obstacle to the achievement of success. Moths and butterflies have their food plants that they visit frequently, and it would be very easy to have a camera in readiness. Nests, eggs, and birds have been done to death, and the substitution of butterflies would be a pleasing novelty. One photographer has given admirable pictures of dormice, rats, and polecats, but the wild mammals still offer a wide field for enterprise. Many have contributed admirable bird subjects, but have not been able to do so with much novelty of effect.

Englishmen, though possibly not all English mothers, who have sons at Oxford, will not be greatly disturbed by the letter signed "An American Mother" on the subject of the furnishing of undergraduates' rooms at Oxford. This lady, who has had a son at Harvard, where he had the luxury of "fresh, if inexpensive, paper, and a room carpeted with soft-toned rugs," sent him for a year to Oxford, where she found the Harvard-nurtured youth was to occupy rooms furnished as such rooms have always been furnished, and for a description of which the reader cannot do better than refer to Mr. Verdant Green. Who does not remember those comfortable, if dingy, deep chairs, the old ugly rep curtains, and the carpet not too often swept, and the tobacco smoke which pervaded all? Our American mother does not mention the bedroom and bed, more primitive, and not very much more attractive to the eye, in which young England at Oxford sleeps. It might have been rather a shock to her. It is a comfort that in an age of luxury our undergraduates at Oxford are not brought up "soft," and that their rooms are emphatically those of young men and not of æsthetics or young ladies.

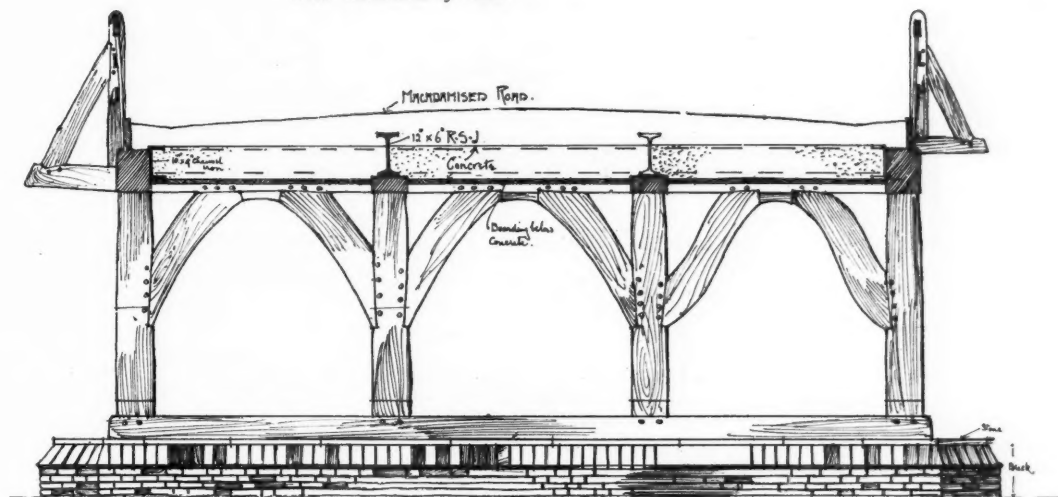
SONNING BRIDGES.

ALTERNATIVE DESIGNS IN TIMBER AND TIMBER AND BRICK.

With Estimates of Cost.

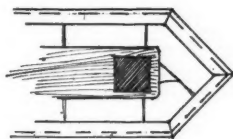
THAT the Oxfordshire County Council have still an open mind on the subject of Sonning Bridges can scarcely be doubted, and there is every reason to hope that the majority both of the Council and the Bridges Committee are by no means indifferent to the opportunity now afforded of replacing the old structures by one which might justify those bodies in claiming a high place for the practical maintenance of taste and tradition in an historic county, while meeting the needs of the day. Everyone is agreed that the new bridge must be strong enough to carry heavy traffic. Practically everybody who has considered both the *utile* and the *dulce* is agreed that an iron girder bridge will be a hideous disfigurement, and that if its use can be avoided at any reasonable cost something else should be substituted, in keeping with the fine brick bridge which will still stand. The cost of merely repainting an iron bridge means a heavy and recurring outlay in itself, and each repainting will deepen its want of harmony with the surroundings.

As a positive contribution to the question of Sonning Bridges, we now lay before our readers details of the plans shown in our issue of September 20th, giving, however, alternative designs, one in timber only, one in timber and brick, from the hand of Mr. E. L. Lutyens, whose work, by its structural excellence in all materials, but especially in brick and timber, and by its good sense and good taste, has won a lasting reputation in every department of country architecture. To this are added estimates for the cost of the two designs, by the famous firm of Cubitts, the premier builders in England, whose name itself is a recommendation when house property is in the market.

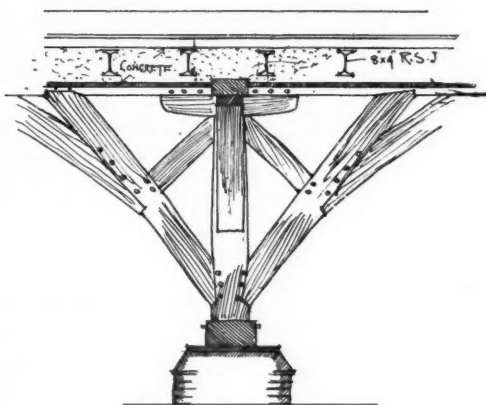


SECTION OF SUGGESTED BRIDGE: WOOD PILES ON BRICK PIERS.

Proposal A, showing 20ft. Roadway.



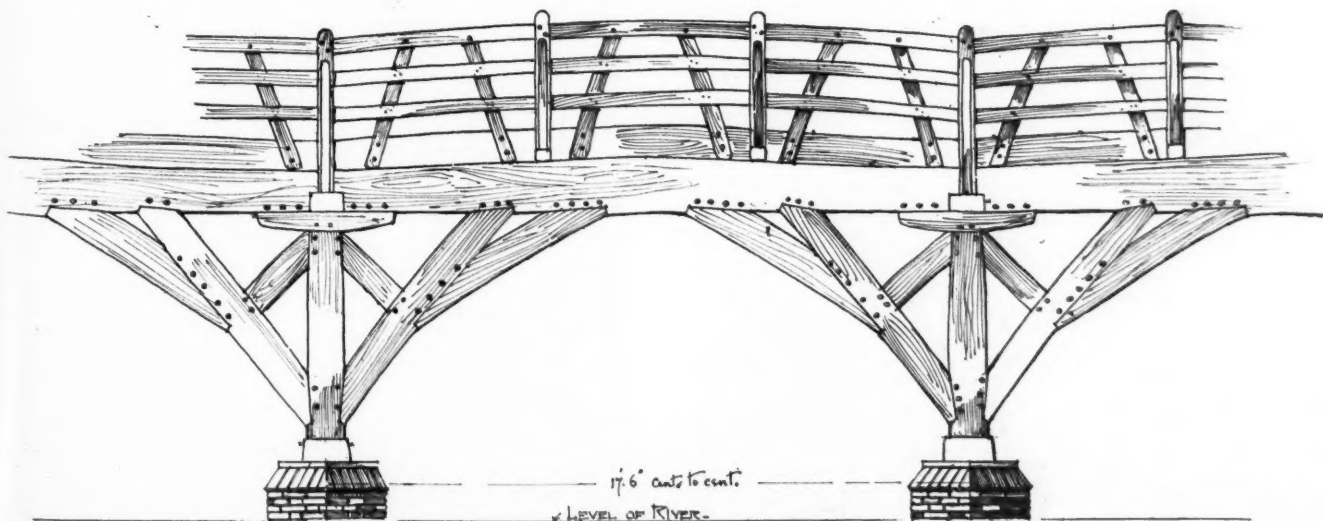
PLAN



PART OF LONGITUDINAL SECTION

It will be seen that of the two sets of designs the first, described as Proposal A, and shown on this page, has lower supports of brick on concrete for the piers. Otherwise the timber bridge is the same in both, and Mr. Lutyens' proposal for converting the connecting solid brick causeway into an arched structure—an improvement on the old design—is also identical in the two plans. The timber bridge is immensely strong, as will be evident to anyone who considers the strength given by solid beams of 18in. square oak (the size of the main beams). It will be seen from the sectional drawing that the piers stand in groups of four under the bridge, though looking directly up stream, as in the first illustration, the front pier covers the other three. Comparing these designs with the old bridge, it also appears that the new piers are so much more substantial that, occurring at less frequent intervals, their number is reduced by nearly one half, thus leaving the stream more open to boat traffic.

They are calculated to carry any heavy traffic which could possibly be put upon them, up to the most massive traction engine. Travellers to the West will remember that practically the whole traffic of the Great Western

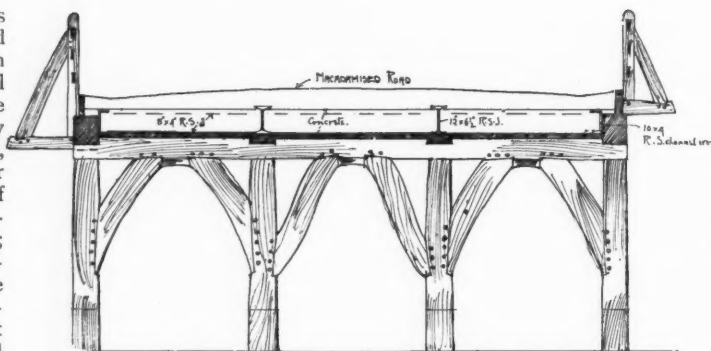


PART ELEVATION

Railway through Cornwall goes over wooden bridges designed by Brunel and built more than a century ago. They are still strong and sound, after the wear and vibration of fifty years' railway work. Of course, the Sonning Bridge would never be required to stand this class of strain, *i.e.*, the shaking and prolonged shock of high-speed cars; but that wood has been successfully used for such work on the main line of one of our most important railways is an argument in its favour. It should be added that these designs and estimates are for a 20ft. bridge. The existing old brick bridge, which the Council cannot touch, is only 16ft. wide. An increase of the new bridge to 24ft.—proposed by the Council—will probably mean in time the destruction of the brick bridge.

Economy, represented by saving in prime cost and in repairs, probably weighed with the County Council more than anything else. It is indeed difficult to imagine what could have induced even a majority of one to set aside all considerations of site, scenery, architecture, and tradition, if it were not that of saving the pockets of the ratepayers at any sacrifice, however great, for any gain, however small. Economy and efficiency were to be obtained, at an estimated cost of about £8,000. We say estimated because tenders were not yet invited, and these may prove to exceed the surveyor's estimate, though that is a very high one.

Of the two suggestions and sets of plans here published,



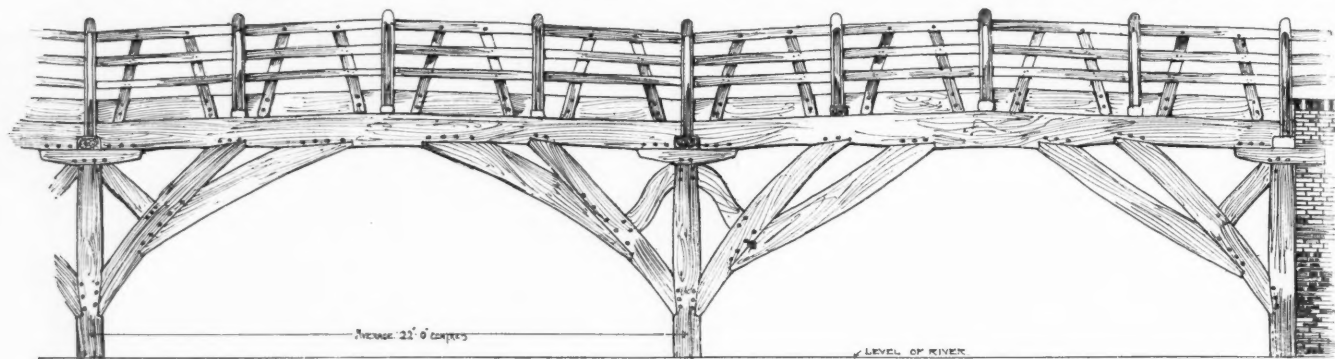
SECTION OF SUGGESTED PILE BRIDGE.—PROPOSAL B

would be constructed of oak, or in the case of the piles themselves of teak, bedded in white lead where framed together and bolted with strong copper bolts. The road itself would be composed of rolled steel joists and concrete 10in. thick, the joists being entirely bedded in the concrete so as to protect them from rusting, and covered with macadam. In the case of Proposal A the wooden piers would rest on a brick and concrete foundation. In Proposal B the upright posts themselves would be driven into the river-bed as piles. Should Proposal A be selected, a considerable saving might be effected in carrying out the work if it could be arranged that the river might be diverted first into the mill and main streams, and next into the main stream and weir stream. This would lessen the amount of coffer dam work required to be done. It would also be necessary to provide a sum for keeping the old bridge open for traffic during the rebuilding.—[This would have to be done in any case.—E.D.]—“and for pulling down from time to time and removing the same as the new bridge is completed, and we suggest that this sum should be £1,000. When at Sonning the other day we noticed that a certain amount of brick foundation was already in hand, and as our estimate includes everything for the whole length of the bridge, the

between Mill Bridge and that by the French Horn, with its new brick arches and piers, as in Proposal A, is only £4,264.

That the above summary may not be deemed in any way a rough or too condensed account, we give also Messrs. Cubitt's letter in full, for the consideration of those who prefer to see the details for themselves:

“As requested by COUNTRY LIFE, we herewith beg to enclose our estimate for the wooden and brick bridge at Sonning, in accordance with the designs and specifications of Mr. E. L. Lutyens. The wooden bridge



PART ELEVATION OF PILE BRIDGE

that with brick supports to the piers is the more desirable, and for certain reasons the more satisfactory. The brick standards on which the wooden supports rest are structurally indestructible. They are more durable than stone. In appearance they also carry on the general idea of the old brick bridge, with its long line of arches, and of the arched brick viaduct leading from Mill Bridge to that leading finally to the Oxford bank. They would add an additional feature to the bridge, and one which would be absolutely permanent, and available not only now, but for centuries to come, when the time for renewing the timber superstructure arrived. The cost of this striking and effective addition to the beauties of the river and the convenience of the public is estimated by Messrs. Cubitt at £6,158, or about £2,000 less than the steel girder bridge proposed by the Council's surveyor. The mere difference of

value of the work already executed (on the intervening brick causeway) would have to be deducted from our estimate.”—WM. CUBITT AND CO.

With regard to the strength of a wood bridge as against a steel girder bridge, the authority and weight attaching to any opinion of Sir Bradford Leslie's is so great as to warrant our quotation of his letter in the *Times*:

“Masonry or brick arched bridges” (Sir Bradford writes) “are the best and most economical, because they are practically imperishable. Timber comes next; timber bridges, properly designed, are as strong as steel. If timber is burnt with bichloride of zinc under pressure it becomes non-inflammable. Brunel's timber viaducts on the Cornish Railway carried the traffic for forty years, and many of them are still in existence. Timber bridges are half the price of steel; if the saving be invested at compound interest the accumulated fund would pay for the renewal of the timber from time to time as required and still show a large economy as compared with steel. I might almost add



GENERAL ELEVATION OF PORTION OF BRIDGES.

capital cost, used as a sinking fund, would pay for all repairs and rebuild the timber portions when this becomes necessary. If £2,000 seems too much to pay for the difference between brick lower piers to the bridge, then the cost of Proposal B, which so far as appearance goes is very little less satisfactory than that of Proposal A, is still more encouraging, being nearly a half less than that of the iron girder scheme.

The wooden piers in this case would be used as piles, and driven into the bed of the river, teak being probably the wood selected, though the other timber would be massive oak. Pile-driving is a very safe form of pier-making, for there are no hidden difficulties in the way, such as sometimes occur in making brick or stone piers in a river-bed. It is a cheap and handy means to the end desired. The cost of this second proposal, with the rebuilding of the brick causeway

that timber is safer than steel; a steel pillar or strut is liable to collapse by a blow, especially when under strain, and let down an entire span; timber will give or yield and recover its form. Steel is liable to corrosion in ungetatable places, and the damage may go on until the bridge collapses; this was the case with the Hastings suspension bridge at Calcutta.”

In conclusion, we can only express a hope that the Oxfordshire County Council will take a fresh view of this question. The proposed destruction of the bridges has roused a controversy that has at least had the effect of bringing out much fresh material, suggestion of detail, and variety of design, and a County Council with the traditions of Oxford and Oxfordshire behind it, surely cannot afford to neglect enlightened public opinion. It was not thus that the question of rebuilding Magdalen Bridge, one of the greatest beauties of their beautiful county, was approached, or its widening and adaptation to modern needs

completed, so as to leave it still as beautiful as ever. That alone might serve as a model, if the Council need one, for careful and conscientious treatment of a unique county bridge and a gem of architecture, though on a site perhaps less endowed by Nature than that which now lies half doomed at Sonning, architecture had done more to make its surroundings stately. But buildings can be made, given money and designs; scenery cannot, and nothing would restore this portion of the river's beauty with such a structure as the proposed girder bridge foisted into it.



RACING NOTES

THE weather favoured the racing fraternity last week, and nothing could have been more enjoyable than the conditions under which racing was carried on at Lingfield, Lewes, and other places; consequently the attendance everywhere was good, both in the stands and in the cheaper rings, and the good going was productive of good fields. It was a long time since we had had such a continuance of really first-rate going, and as this is one of the most important elements towards success, it is to be hoped that the executives of some of our wealthy gate-money meetings will take the condition of their courses into consideration.

The "Petting Question" is always with us in some shape or form. Its last reappearance is at a Diocesan Conference at Carlisle, where Mr. J. W. Lowther, as usual, talked very sound sense when he pointed out that the evil of betting was one of degree, and that it was utterly impossible to make the taking of a risk illegal. One of the most astonishing things about the controversy is the way in which people otherwise sane and capable will stand up and dogmatise about betting, without the most elementary notion of what they are talking about. Sir John Hibbert is a case in point; he is a man whose opinions on most subjects carry weight, yet he is reported to have said, after deprecating betting by persons under age, "he thought a law might be passed making it illegal for persons to bet who were under age, and that if they did bet there should be no means of recovering the money lost to persons who betted with them." This is sheer nonsense, and one would have thought that every man of the world knew two things, namely, that money cannot be recovered from a minor for anything except necessities, and, secondly, that money lost in betting cannot be recovered from anyone at all. I only mention these points in my notes because such utterances by persons of position who ought to know better only tend to obscure the issue, and prevent reasonable men who do know what they are talking about from mitigating evils which are admittedly prevalent.

The Carlisle race-course, where very pleasant meetings are held, is the property of the Duke of Devonshire, and one of the conditions of the lease has been that the company who are the tenants should not pay a dividend exceeding 5 per cent. The lease expires in 1904, and the company have a large amount of accumulated funds. They propose to ask for power in the new lease to pay dividends up to 12½ per cent. No man understands what is needed to make a meeting successful better than the Duke of Devonshire, and it is to be hoped that he will insist on a considerable expenditure for the benefit of owners and the public out of the money which came from their pockets. Liberality in management is the way to ensure success, and it is pleasant to find that the Sandown executive were successful in resisting the attempt of the local authorities to rate them to excess. The cost of the litigation has cost the Kingston Union an addition of a penny in the pound on the rates.

At Birmingham on Monday week Midland sportsmen assembled in strong force, and racing was of fair interest, though rather of the plating order. Lord Bradford, whose colours one does not see to the front now so often as in years gone by, secured the Edgbaston Handicap with Stretton, a son of Sir Hugo. The principal race of the day, the September Plate, was won by Mr. Percy's Isle of Man, who, in receipt of a lot of weight and ridden by the successful apprentice Trigg, easily disposed of a field of seven, including Parramatta. Backers had a great day, every favourite coming in first, and sportsmen returned home very jubilant; the ring, however, had their revenge next day, though only to a slight extent, for the winners were well backed in every case, though in most the actual favourites were not successful.

Brighton gave us a good day's sport on Tuesday, and again backers had rather the best of the day by the help of Marcotint, Emily Melton, and Molehill, the victory of the latter being a very smart performance. Emily Melton had not much to beat in the Autumn Handicap, and was much fancied at 2 to 1, but her supporters had a rare fright, for she only got home by a neck from Perdicus. College Queen was well backed for the Wivelsfield Plate, but Mr. Blenkiron's mare was never really dangerous, and the spoils fell to Mr. Heinemann's Valenza.

Wednesday's racing took place at Lingfield, and opened with the Club Welter, in which Halsey on No Lady, whose price was 8 to 1, cantered in six lengths ahead of all the amateurs. The Two-Mile Selling Handicap brought out a large field, and Sir John Kelk's Liquidator, much fancied by the public, won, and was sold for 500 guineas to Mr. Croker, who left a nice division for Mark Tapley. Mr. Lamb's Capot was voted a good thing for the Crowborough Nursery Handicap, and so it turned out, for he won in the easiest style from No Denial. In the Brasted High-Weight Handicap the winner, Mimicry, was ridden by J. H. Martin, this being, I believe, his first win since his collar-bone was broken at Pontefract. A lot of betting took place on this race, Mr. G. Thursby's Aggressor and Mr. Frank Gardner's Angmering being very heavily backed by their connections; neither had anything to do with the finish, Decave and Torrent being respectively second and third.

At Pontefract backers began well when they made Dewi Synt favourite for the Leeds Handicap, though he only pulled through by the shortest of heads from Maccoon. G. McCall rode a very fine finish, and deserved the cheers he got as he returned to the paddock. The success of Visionary in the Trial Selling Plate was another blow to the ring, for he started at 2 to 1, in a field of twelve. No less than 6 to 5 was laid on Herald, in a field of eleven, by

backers with two victories to their credit, but he could get no nearer than third. A fine finish was seen in the West Riding Autumn Handicap, when short heads only separated Queen Catherine, Thursday II., and Cliftonhall, after a race which was keenly contested throughout. The concluding day at Pontefract was again favoured by delightful weather, and good sport was enjoyed, though backers had a very bad day, only succeeding in spotting one winner.

At Lewes Sir John Blundell Maple won two races in the day with Princess Jessie, a daughter of Prince Hampton and Jessamine. She won on each occasion by three lengths. In the Ashcombe Handicap the public declared for Engineer, in spite of the many times he has disappointed his friends, but a good deal of money went on Polin and White Nun II. The latter made the running at a very great pace, and seemed as if she would come in alone, but inside the distance Engineer challenged her, and got the better of the encounter; but no sooner had backers begun to think their money safe than little Griggs set Carburton going in most resolute style, and coming with one long strong run landed him a winner. Carburton is a son of Carline and the flying Mrs. Butterwick, and, unlike the rest of the Duke of Portland's horses, which are trained at Kingsclere, is under the care of Mr. Lambton. In the Rothschild Plate Mr. Hartigan landed Gean Tree an easy winner from Cottontail, on whom a lot of money was betted at 5 and 6 to 4 on.

It is satisfactory to hear that there is a strong probability that the negotiations between the York Race Committee and the Pasture Masters will lead to an amicable solution of the difficulty, and that the Knavesmire may still be the scene of good sport for many years to come.

The Grand Prix de Paris for 1904 has obtained no fewer than 530 entries, which is a record. English entries are very numerous and of high class, the Duke of Portland heading the list with nine.

MENDIP.

ON THE GREEN.

THE St. Andrew's general meeting did several good things, for which we cannot be more than sufficiently grateful, for not even Solomon and all the prophets could say what the general meeting of the Royal and Ancient Club might not do. It approved, in substance, of the idea of an international match, appointed delegates to confer with the Championship delegates as to dates and details, and so on. One of the details will have to be the qualification, whether by birth or residence, or whether the competitor may make his selection of either standard. Then it approved also, in substance, of the new code of rules that is the result of the severe labours of the Rules of Golf Committee. That is a good thing. We shall begin playing under the newest dispensation after the New Year, so we had better begin buying books of the rules and learning them now. Also the meeting resolved that a portrait in oils of "Old Tom" Morris should be painted and hung in the clubroom. This is very much as it should be. The artist really has a great occasion, for "Old Tom," who has been drawn and photographed as often as any professional beauty, should make a fine subject, picturesque and with much character in the expression. It is to be hoped the artist will not forget the pipe. Another wise thing that the meeting did was to commit itself to no definite opinion about the Haskell ball. It may be necessary, or it may not, to lengthen courses—they are quite long enough for me—but the definition of the regulation ball and club is a very subtle matter, and one that a general meeting does well to let alone.

As for the medal play, that was another triumph for the Yankee—both first and second medallists used a Haskell. But it was a very great performance on Mr. Balfour Melville's part to win with the score he did—77—the lowest that the medal has ever been won with. The records would show how long ago it is that Mr. Leslie Balfour, as he then was, first won a St. Andrew's medal. I forget, but I think it must be thirty years ago. And he has been playing for the medals ever since, often winning them, and now at length breaks all records. Mr. Melville is not quite as old as Mr. Hutchings (amateur champion), but he is old enough not to do such things as record breaking. It would be interesting if we could know for how much the Haskell ball counted in the great result, but of course we never can know. Certainly it is a ball that commends itself to one as one grows older—a good "old man's ball," for which one cannot be too thankful in the increasing stages of senile decay. Mr. Maxwell did well with his 79 (and it had a seven in it), but not well enough. Mr. Mure Fergusson was 81, and a great many people a great many more. Replaying a match that they lost last year, the brothers Hunter beat the brothers Blackwell in the morning, but lost in the afternoon. That is all about the St. Andrew's meeting.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

A BEEFEATER AT HOME.

YOU have been at the Zoo when the lions and tigers were fed. You have observed their growing restlessness, heard their roars, and seen how the meat was wolfed as soon as it reached them. The hyena, however, is not a showy beast, and therefore they keep him in the background, even in his most interesting moment, which is when they give him his food. Ordinarily he is a characterless creature, shifting his position continually only because it is his nature to be shifty. They feed the lions and the tigers and the bears, and there is the usual uproar. Then a great lump of meat falls in the middle of the hyena's cage. It becomes another and far more impressive creature. The long hair on its back rises on end, and continues erect. It executes a prance and a dance with sudden changes of direction which suggest the idea that some capricious person has it at the end of a string. You go back to the lions and tigers and find them settling down to sleep. You come back and the hyena is still dancing. It is not a pretty animal, and it does not bear a good name, but unless you have seen it performing this devil dance you do not know how evil it is. When darkness has fallen, and there is never a visitor to see, it will sneak up to the bit of meat and devour it stealthily.

SOME STORIES OF THE BELLS.

"Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell;
Hark! now I hear them! ding, dong, bell!"
—*Tempest.*

THESE is an old saying, obviously perverted from its first meaning, that "Nine taylor's make a man." The proverb or saw is quite stupid, except as a piece of rudeness, invented by some rival set of craftsmen, who had a grudge against the Honourable Company of Merchant Taylors. Mr. Ditchingham, in his interesting chapter on church bells, contained in his book on "The History of the Village," finds what is probably the real origin of the phrase. When a person was either dying or dead a bell was rung to drive away evil spirits which might beset the passage of the soul from this world to the other. This was the "passing bell." A change was made later by which the bell not only cleared the spiritual road of ghostly enemies, but told the survivors in this world what manner of person had departed. The bell tolled thrice, three times over, if the dead were a man; twice, three times over, if it were a woman; once, three times repeated, if it were a child. Thus the saying should read, "Three tellers make a man," which explains itself.

Here is a curious list of the names of a Danish or Saxon peal of bells at Croyland Abbey. They were: Pega, Bega, Tatum, Thurketil, Betelen, Bartholomew, and Guthlac. Thurketil was the name of the Danish Earl of East Anglia, and survives as a common surname in those parts now, slightly altered into Thurkettle. The bells at Husborne Crawley in Bedfordshire have the following dates: 1611, 1637, 1679, 1613, 1800, 1616. They were nearly destroyed in the year 1841, when their frames were found to be on fire after a thunder-storm, but the flames were quenched by buckets of water carried up the spiral staircase. It is strange that these masses of metal do not attract lightning more often than they do.

"Bunyan's Bell" is No. 4 in the alphabet peal in the tower of Elstow Church, where the writer of "Pilgrim's Progress" spent his youth. Among the few amusements which he could indulge in was that of bell ringing. This he afterwards abandoned in the revulsion of feeling which his conversion engendered. He had all sorts of uneasy fears that it was a sinful indulgence, and that the bell might fall on him as a punishment. One feels very sorry for poor Bunyan in these hours of intense self-condemnation and self-reproach, due not to any particular sins he had committed, but to the capacity in his great but uninstructed intelligence for realising the difference between the everyday life and behaviour of a rough village blacksmith and the ideal, which his powerful imagination constructed, not only in general, but in detail, of the life of the just made perfect. From the voices of the bells to the thoughts of the man who rang them is a natural transition, and deep will be the sympathies of every feeling man for the horrible internal conflicts which Bunyan underwent in his very early manhood, and described with so much power of language. Fortunately the outpourings of this uninstructed man were appreciated at their due value by another very strong and very instructed mind. Lord Macaulay's comments on Bunyan would have brought him singular consolation



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BELFRY OF ST. JAMES'S, HARBORNE, CRAWLEY.

had they been available at the time, and are an interesting document now.

"Bell-ringing and playing at hockey seem to have been the worst vices of this depraved tinker. They would have passed for virtues with Archbishop Laud. It is quite clear that from a very early age Bunyan was a man of strict life and of a tender conscience. He married very early. He solemnly declares that he was strictly faithful to his wife. He owns, indeed, that when a boy he never spoke without an oath. But a single admonition cured him of this bad habit for life, and the cure must have been wrought early, for, at eighteen years of age, he was in the army of the Parliament, and if he had carried the vice of profaneness into that service he would doubtless have received something more than an admonition from Sergeant Bind-their-Kings-in-chains or Captain Hew - Agag - in - pieces - before - the - Lord."

In the foreground of the picture of Bunyan's Bell are the bar and wire that work the hammer of the clock. It strikes on another bell (No. 5). We believe some of the oldest ladders in England are those which are in the church towers in which there is no stairway leading up to the belfries. The only part of them which ever seems to decay is now and then one of the rungs, and these are often mended in a curious fashion with whatever the sexton happened to have handy in the way of bits of wood that would fit. Chair legs are common objects in these ladders; the writer has also, apparently after the church had been partly restored, seen the broken rungs of belfry ladders replaced with bits of old communion rails. "The Belfry Ladder" here shown is a comparatively new one, in the tower of St. Giles, Upper Gravenhurst, Bedfordshire. The bells in this church are hung in a frame, with an open space and no flooring under the mouth of each. A bell just ringing is seen in the photograph of the belfry of old Pirton Church. The



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PIRTON CHURCH: THE OLD BELFRY.

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leverage of the wheel fixed to the beam on which it swings pulls it up vertically till it "stands on its head," and the tongue, continuing its impetus after the check, smites the metal lip. Ages seem to have passed before the right composition of bell-metal was settled. This is odd, because bronze was the oldest metal used, and its composition for other purposes was understood from the earliest times. A bronze bell found by Sir Henry Layard at Nineveh contained ten parts of copper to one of tin. The proportions were finally settled in the Netherlands by Van den Gheyn, who used four of copper to one of tin. There was an ancient and nasty superstition in bell-founding that something had to be killed and put into the melting-pot, otherwise there would be flaws. The belief is credited with the following gruesome story: A bell-founder could not get his metal right, and ultimately found that an enemy came and tampered with the melting-pot. He forthwith killed him, and to conceal the deed threw the body into the hot and liquid bronze. The bell after this "came out" in great perfection; but unfortunately a child of the bell-founder had seen the homicide, and could not keep the secret. The man was then tried, without the benefit of extenuating circumstances,

and executed, general belief crediting him with having killed and melted up the man to ensure the quality of his bell.



Mrs. Delves Broughton. ST. MARY'S CHURCH, LOWER GRAVENHURST. Copyright



Mrs. D. Broughton. ST. GILES, UPPER GRAVENHURST—TO THE BELFRY. Copyright

One good thing often produces another. This is true in the case of the invention of the bell, for to the desire to hang them properly we owe most of the finest towers in the world, other than those meant for defence. This is most clearly seen in the case of the great cathedrals of Italy. They often had a central dome, as at Florence, and that was carried on a kind of tower. But usually a real tower was built to hold the bells, and called by the name campanile. It was often quite detached from the church, as, for instance, in the case of the leaning tower of Pisa. It is remarkable that after the fall of the great Campanile at Florence most of the bells were found uninjured. The curious detached round towers, like tall chimneys, near many of the Irish churches, were probably built to hold one or two very sacred bells. It may be mentioned that the bell of St. Patrick, at Belfast, is only 6in. high, and is a highly ornamented hand-bell. In many of the city cathedrals the bells were not all the property of the church. The latter found "accommodation" for secular bells, too, belonging to the town. Thus in Antwerp Cathedral three are the property of the burghers of Antwerp. In the Netherlands the bells were looked upon almost in the same light that images of the gods were in the days of the ancients, and were captured and treated much as old Assyrian or other conquerors treated the enemies' idols. The successful besiegers of a city would take and melt down the bells of the conquered town as an act of triumph. If the other side came out best in a subsequent fight they would melt down the captured bronze guns, and cast a fresh lot of bells out of them. It should be added that these Netherlands bells were the real masterpieces of the art. Not only were they very fine in tone, but also often decorated elaborately. On them were not only inscriptions but also wreaths, flowers, foliage, friezes of figures, and portraits. The famous bell of Ghent had the following inscription, put here roughly into Flemish-English: "My name is Roland. When I clip there is brand (fire); When I (? cry out) there is storm in Flanders-land."

It may be added that picturesque as the old timber frames and hanging of the bells was, it is often too heavy for the towers or too weak for the bells. If the towers rocked they not infrequently split, and sometimes have been known to topple altogether in their upper storeys. The Americans, with one or two English firms, have lately paid great attention to the art of hanging bells properly, and with success. C. J. CORNISH.

IN THE GARDEN.

AUTUMN FLOWERS—THE FLAME-FLOWERS.

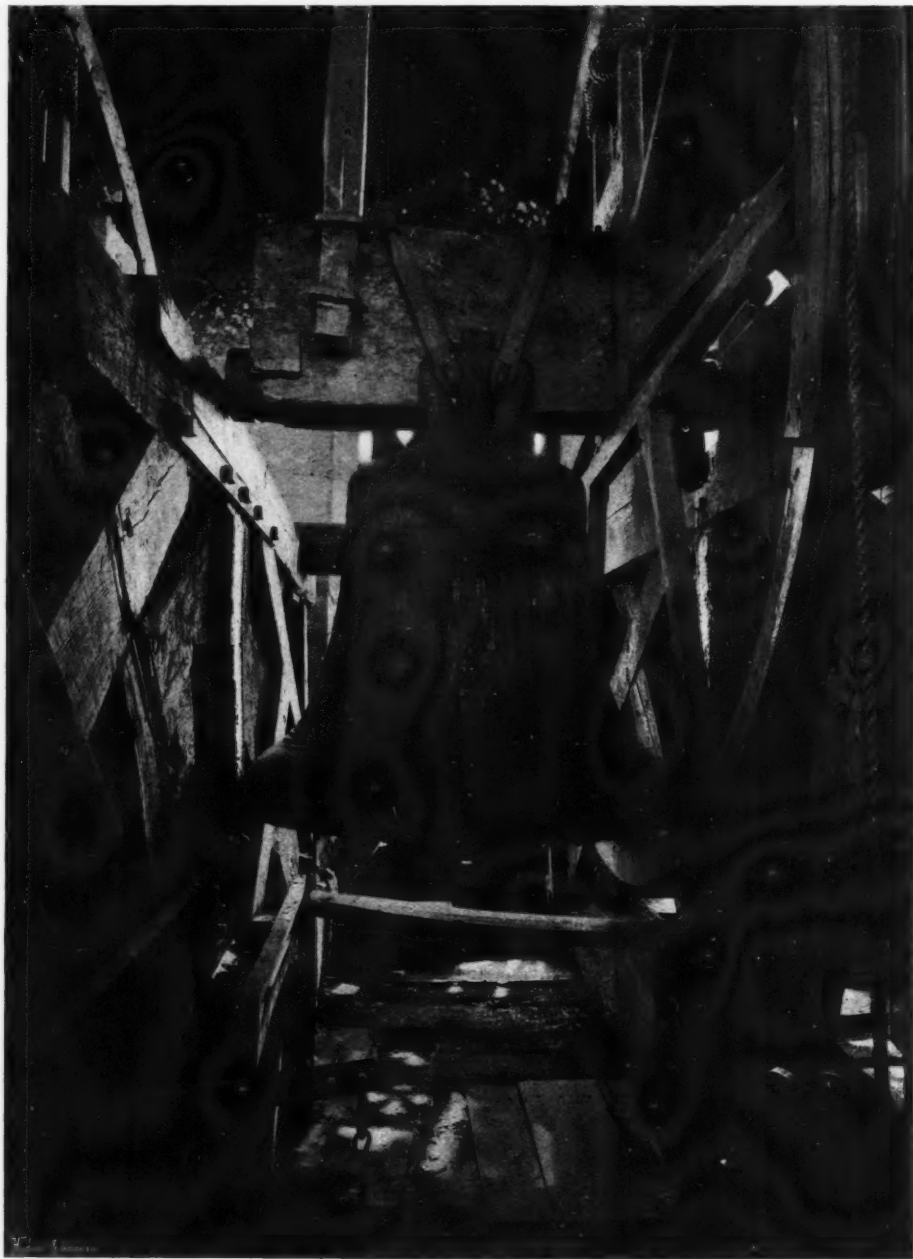
IN recent notes we described the Asters, or Starworts, or Michaelmas Daisies—to give the three names by which these beautiful flowers are known—Japanese Anemones, and the Moon Daisy (*Chrysanthemum uliginosum*), but there are several more groups to consider. One is that known as the

Tritoma or Kniphofia, commonly called Red-hot-poker plant, or Flame-flower. Flame-flower is a happily descriptive name, for the spikes are like torches of fire, and make in the autumn a rich splash of colour. We noticed a rich grouping of them lately in a Surrey garden. The border was filled with Tritomas, African Marigolds, and Dahlia Lady Ardilaun, but the Tritomas were the predominant colour. Another place to put them is by a lake or pond side. It is not, perhaps, quite the spot one would think suitable, but the effect is excellent, only there must be a large group, not a few spikes. At Kew, by the lake in the wilderness, or Arboretum as it is also called, the Flame-flowers are planted in a group, and some hundred spikes are in beauty at one time. This is the way to get the full effect of the tall and massive spikes of vermillion and yellow. The most familiar kind is *K. Uvaria*, which, in spite of many later introductions, is about as good as any; but *grandis*, *nobilis*, and *caulescens* are excellent, too, the two former in particular. The colouring is remarkable, and the spikes are very tall and handsome. Those who would enjoy a selection of Kniphofias should not forget the many charming hybrids, such as the pure golden-yellow Obelisk, and *Phizeri*, scarlet and yellow. The secret of success in growing the Flame-flower is to plant the roots deep, so that they can go safely through weeks of severe frosts. By this deep planting and a covering of dry leaves they seldom suffer. Well-decayed manure forms a good top-dressing in spring when new growth begins. The soil must be well drained. Though planting by the lakeside is advised, the roots must not be by the water edge, rather on the bank, where the soil is dry.

Mrs. Delves Broughton.

BUNYAN'S BELL, ELSTOW.

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HELIANTHUS H. G. MOON.
The notes we wrote lately about the perennial Sunflowers have interested more than one of our readers. The following remarks about one of the latest additions to the perennial Sunflowers are interesting: "*Helianthus H. G. Moon* is quite one of the best perennial Sunflowers for the garden, being wonderfully free, the colour yellow with a lemon shade at the tips of the florets, which are long and narrow. Each flower is 6in. across. The leaves are narrower than those of most *Helianthus*es, and the growth is loose and graceful, but it is not a tall willowy plant, as it does not reach a height of more than 5ft. One

characteristic feature is that the plants do not form underground runners so freely as *H. Miss Mellish*, and for this reason it is not to be disturbed more than is absolutely necessary. Owing to the dearth of runners the true plant is scarce, and likely to remain so for a long time."

HERBACEOUS PHLOXES.

A great autumn flower is this, massive in growth, and sumptuous and varied in colouring. We planted by a moat bank a group last spring of the white variety *Mrs. E. H. Jenkins*, which is perhaps the most beautiful of all white Phloxes; it grows between 3ft. and 4ft. high, and has an immense panicle or bunch of flowers, which are individually very large and with plenty of substance, so that they remain fresh longer than those of thinner texture. The Phlox is not seen to advantage unless grouped. Some may think our repeated advice to group somewhat tiresome, but in the case of such things as this it is essential, to get the full value of the colouring and massive flower bunches, to put several plants together. All who have visited good gardens know this, and that the well-planted border is not one in which a hundred things are represented, but a few chosen flowers well massed. The Phlox is a moisture-loving plant; it does best in moist, almost wet, soil, and for this reason it is wise to water freely in dry weather, and when growth is beginning

to much round with manure. Watering and mulching are the secrets of success. This is the season to prepare the place in which the Phloxes are to be planted. The beds must be dug deeply in autumn, and if the soil is light and well drained put in the bottom a foot deep of cow manure, then a layer of soil, and then fill up with the ordinary soil to the surface. Planting may be done now or in the spring, and of the two seasons perhaps spring is the better, especially when the soils are very heavy; the plants then have no winter trials to undergo. As some may wish to plant now, a selection of the finest varieties is given.

Scarlet and allied shades.—*Etna* is a superb Phlox, and one of the first that should be chosen. The flower is scarlet with a salmon shade in it, very large, and in a panicle. We have seen this in many gardens, Hampton Court especially, and it always stands apart from all other garden flowers in beauty at the same time. *Coquelicot* is another Phlox described as "indispensable" in catalogues. One cannot always believe a trade catalogue, but indispensable this variety certainly is when an unusual colour is desired in early autumn. The flowers are of intense colouring, a rich and warm vermillion-orange, quite unlike anything in the garden, and so strong

and handsome is it that we planted a large bed of it on the lawn, gave the roots plenty of manure and water, and the result is a picture that all our garden friends declare is as pleasurable as crimson Water-lilies on the lake surface. In this set, and by this we mean the salmon and scarlet shades, are some remarkable Phloxes. *Boule de Feu*, *Pantheon*, *W. Robinson* (a clear salmon rose), *Le Soleil*, *Le Siècle*, *Coccinea*, and *Aurore Boreale* are a few that we made note of this autumn.

White.—We have already mentioned *Mrs. E. H. Jenkins* and *Jeanne d'Arc*, and to these add *Avalanche*, 2½ft.; *Albatre*, 3ft.; *Sulphide*, 3ft.; and *Diadem*, 2½ft. Another set has white flowers with a coloured centre or eye, and of these *Countess of Aldean* is very charming; the centre is carmine. *Giant de Batailles* is very handsome, with a crimson centre, also *Edith*, which is purple.

Purple.—This group is very distinct, but requires careful use. Probably about the finest is *Eugenie D'Anzavilliers*, a soft lilac shade, with white centre; *Le Mahdi*, purple-violet, both 2½ft. high; and *Paul Bert*, violet-blue.

DAHLIA LADY ARDILAUN.

We saw this excellent Dahlia in a Surrey garden recently. It is one of the best border kinds we have come across. It is a double flower, of a glowing crimson deepening towards the centre, and stands up on a long straight stem. This tall stem is essential in a good garden Dahlia. Near this variety were several Cactus varieties, but useless for effect, as the flowers, beautiful in themselves, were lost amongst the leaves. Raisers of new varieties should cease trying to get new colours, and simply strive to improve the growth. A Dahlia that seems ashamed to show its lovely flowers is not of much use in the border.

AUTUMN COLOURING OF TREE AND SHRUB.

In a recent number of our contemporary the *Garden* a note was made of some of the more beautiful of trees and shrubs for their autumn colours. Among commoner trees the yellow of the Horse Chestnut, the crimson of the wild Cherry, and the golden shade of the black and Lombardy Poplars add much to the rich beauty of autumn. Several of the Maples are noteworthy, more especially the numerous varieties of Japanese Maples (*Acer palmatum* and *A. japonicum*), these, as well as the Manchurian *Acer ginnala*, turning to various shades of red. The common Sycamore and Norway Maple change to yellow, but Schwedler's variety of the latter becomes red. Other tints that deserve mention are *Amelanchier canadensis*, whose foliage changes to lovely crimson shades in autumn; *Koelreuteria japonica*, soft yellow; *Pyrus torminalis*, bronzy red; *Ginkgo biloba*, pale gold; *Cladrasia tinctoria*, yellow; *Parrotia persica* and *H. amelis*, bronzy red and yellow. The common Beech is nearly always beautiful, changing first to yellow, then to warm brown tints. Among conifers the yellow-leaved variety (*aurea*) of the Scotch Pine is remarkable in retaining its colour during the winter months only, becoming green in spring and summer. *Retinospora squarrosa* and *Cryptomeria elegans* turn bronzy red in winter. The warm red-brown tints of the deciduous Cypress are charming.

Amongst shrubs the Sumachs (*Rhus*) are some of the most striking of autumn colouring shrubs; the best is *R. cotinoides*. Other fine species are *R. typhina*, *R. glabra* (not the cut-leaved variety *laciniata*), and *R. Toxicodendron*, all of which turn red. The Venetian Sumach (*R. Cotinus*) becomes yellow. *Berberis Thunbergi*, which dies off a rich scarlet, is so beautiful in autumn that on some estates it has been planted in great quantity, not only for cover, but so that sportsmen may enjoy its colour during the shooting season. Its evergreen ally, *B. Aquifolium*, turns a glowing red or purple after the first frosts. The Giant Azaleas almost always colour richly, either deep glowing crimson, bronzy red, or gold; and of other ericaceous plants the warm tints of *Pieris mariana* and the rich crimson of the *Enkianthus* should be mentioned. The latter American *Vaccinium* (*corymbosum* and its various forms) are always lovely. Our native Guelder Rose (*Viburnum Opulus*) becomes crimson in autumn, whilst the common Hazel or *Rhamnus Frangula* often produce fine effects in yellow. The feathery foliage of *Spirea Thunbergi* is singularly beautiful when it changes

from its natural pale green to crimson; and the other Japanese shrubs, both unfortunately very rare, are remarkable for their autumn beauty. These are *Disanthus cercidifolia*, an ally of the Witch Hazels, a lovely claret colour; and *Viturnum alnifolium*, crimson. Other noteworthy shrubs are *Fothergilla alnifolia*, rich red; *Euonymus alatus*, crimson; *Deutzia crenata*, yellow; and *Pyrus arbutifolia*, red. The common Brambles of our woods should not be passed over without mention; they turn a rich glowing red, and for their autumnal beauty alone may be used as undergrowth in uneven parts of the garden and woodland.

Of climbers the finest of all deciduous ones for walls is, of course, Veitch's ampelopsis. Its crimson leaves are now very beautiful on many a wall. *Vitis coignetiae* is one of the noblest of all Vines, and rich crimson also. Other Vines useful in this respect are the Teinturier, purple; *V. Romaneti*, red; and the Virginian Creeper, especially that known as *Muralis* or *Engelmanni*, which clings to walls and tree trunks without any artificial support and acquires beautiful red shades in autumn. The Honeysuckle, *Lonicera japonica* var. *flexuosa*, has fine red-purple colouring in its leaf decay.

THE GOLDEN-LEAVED MAPLE (*ACER NEGUNDO* VAR. *AUREA*).

Although a comparatively new shrub, this promises to be a decided acquisition to the list of golden trees and shrubs, as the colour continues good throughout the summer, without either getting burnt by the sun or going off green. The colouring is very like that of the golden plumose Elder (*Sambucus racemosa* var. *plumosa aurea*) and the leaves are somewhat similar. They are bright golden yellow, with a red tint on the petioles, changing to a purplish red at the base. The young unfolding leaves also have a pale red tint, which is in good contrast to the bright yellow of the maturer leaves. The plant is of good constitution and grows freely. It is propagated by budding it on stocks of the type. The other variegated forms of *Acer Negundo* are *A. N.* var. *variegata*, the white variegated plant so commonly seen, and *A. N.* var. *aureo-variegata*, which is marked with yellow instead of white, and, though rather pretty, does not seem to be very popular.

A BEAUTIFUL NEW TEA ROSE (SOUVENIR DE PIERRE NOTTING).

This Rose will become popular. It is a charming novelty, not quite on the same level as its reputed parents, *Maréchal Niel* and *Maman Cochet*, but yet better than a number of new Roses put into commerce. Probably its reputation gained the variety the gold medal at the Temple Rose Show, for the flowers staged were not remarkable. Its colour is apricot yellow, deepening in the centre and bordered with a rosy carmine. The form is exquisite, pointed outer petals as in *Maréchal Niel*, and the growth appears to be as vigorous as that of *Maman Cochet*. Exhibitors of Tea Roses will hail this variety with delight, and we should say it will be a more useful Rose to the mere amateur than such a variety as *Comtesse de Nadaillac*.

MRS. GALE'S GARDING.—II.

BY EVELYN E. RYND.

SHORTLY afterwards Mrs. Bings came drifting in again, on an evening visit, this time without either the baby or the turning Tommy. The opening door let in with her the sound of a strange distant roaring, which she shut out, while she shut herself in, with bolts and bars, and a regretful air.

"That's Bings," she explained over her shoulder. "It seems a pity 'e should be chantin' that loud an' 'arty with no one to listen to 'im, an' it's a thing as disapints 'im 'imself, but can't be 'elped."

Mrs. Gale said nothing. She sat in her chair with a bitter little smile on her face.

"There's few men takes their drink as 'appy as Bings, which 'e bursts inter musick an' darncin' on the hinstant, as it were," remarked Mrs. Bings, turning a wary eye on the door as the distant roaring swelled furiously upon the air. "Plesingter company reelly couldn't 'ardly be, as different as possible to when 'e's sober, which it goes to me 'eart to leave 'im, but there's limits to— 'Ere 'e comes."

The door of the other cottage suddenly opened, and a torrent of howls poured forth upon the night air. It was then heard that Mr. Bings was lending his soul relief in the strains of "Oh, lay me in me little grave."

"'E's been darncin' the polka to that steady for the larst 'alf-'our," said Mrs. Bings thoughtfully. "Sung slow, with sudding 'ops, which nothin' could 'a' been plesingter, till 'e began for to knock me down whenever 'e fell 'isself, which 'e did it serprised an' reproachful like an' mos' natchrul through hiritation, 'im thinkin' it was me, but, becomin' dang'rous, 'e 'ad to be left a-darncin' lonesome, as is a thing 'e finds mos' disapintin'."

Still Mrs. Gale said nothing. The strains advanced nearer. Presently something fell heavily against the door, and the next instant it shook under a furious assault which made the plaster tinkle round the posts.

"I 'ope the bolt 'olds," remarked Mrs. Bings, philosophically. "'E's a little hextra heasy hiritated to-night, so to speak, through 'avin' been fightin' Hangelo at the Red Lion, an' not feelin' quite as certing as 'e might whether 'e whopped Hangelo, or Hangelo whopped 'im. Besides which, when first 'e come 'ome I manidged to forget 'im, as hallways hupsets 'im a little."

The door shook again, amid roars of a passionate nature, wherein Mr. Bings was discerned to be adjuring Mrs. Bings to become a honeysuckle on condition of his devoting the rest of his natural life to the duties of a bee. Mrs. Bings, inside, smiled in a faint reflective manner, and sighed gently. After several

alternate songs and assaults, mingled with threats couched in regrettably clear language, Mr. Bings fell into a state of deep depression, and was heard to sob loudly once or twice. Seemingly led to the mistake by a train of associations suggested by his situation, he then announced with tears that he was a little match-girl lost in the snow, whose immediate intention it was to pass smiling from slumber to an early death near a Christmas party; after which he explained still weeping that his only clear course of action under the circumstances was to fetch a policeman to arrest her at once for sleeping on other people's doorsteps.

With this intention, having taken an affectionate farewell of the door-post, he departed, and after sitting down on the way several times to cheer the road with song, he at length reached his cottage. The door was heard to close, and almost immediately afterwards unbroken silence prevailed.

"Where's the children?" said Mrs. Gale then.

"Asleep or 'owlin'," replied Mrs. Bings, "an' in some cases perreps both through the nightmare, hexcep' Tommy, as left a-turnin' steady roun' the washtub, but no time to slap 'im. Bings never touches 'em, 'owever light-'arted 'e is, which a better father when drunk couldn't be. Now 'e's sleepin' it orf like hany hangel, I heggspec', but safest to let 'im get sound. Well, I've 'ad rather a night of it."

She came across to the fire and sat down.

"Got a drop er tea?" she asked.

Mrs. Gale rose and took the teapot from the hob.

"'Oo did you say 'e'd been a-fightin' with?" she asked.

"'E'd been fightin' Hangelo," replied Mrs. Bings.

"Is Hangelo back then?" asked Mrs. Gale, pausing with the suspended teapot in her hand.

"Been back hover a week, an' wilder than hever, an' 'ad a fight reg'lar hevery night," said Mrs. Bings; "which 'is American swears is a pichter for to listen to, an' 'imself a pichter for to look at, if 'e 'as got strange blood in 'im somewheres, as in wukkus children is horften the case. Ah, this 'is tea, Mrs. Gale."

"It oughter be," replied Mrs. Gale; "it's been hours on the 'ob."

The two women relapsed into silence, and sat sipping their beverage slowly, with vacant eyes fixed on the fire.

"Well, I 'ad oughter get back, I s'pose," said Mrs. Bings, rising at last. "'E'll be sound orf be now, an' I wants me bed. It hallways makes me feel a bit sick to be knocked about. I heggspec' Tommy's in the washtub be now, too. Goo'-night, Mrs. Gale, an' thank you."

"Your face is bleedin', Mrs. Bings," said Mrs. Gale.

"Ah, I thought 'e'd got 'ome," said Mrs. Bings with pride. "It's from the 'ed. I couldn't find the cut, but I was pretty sure 'is knuckles 'ad drawn blood. Bings isn't one to miss 'is mark, drunk nor sober."

"I could wish 'e wasn't quite set on some of 'is notions," said Mrs. Gale, suddenly, with trembling lips. "But, of course, men aint like wimming; there aint the same need for 'em to listen to reason."

"An' I'm sure a plesingter man than John couldn't reelly be, you know," said Mrs. Bings, "once you get hover 'is little 'obby with 'is fisties. Look at 'is jokes now. The way 'e was makin' fun about your garding again this mornin', Mrs. Gale, nearly made me die a larfin', which I reelly halmost called you in to 'ave a larf at 'im too."

"Laughin' about my garding, was 'e?" said Mrs. Gale, her lips trembling still more.

"Nothink could 'a' been plesingter than it was to 'ear 'im," said Mrs. Bings emphatically.

"I thought perreps it 'ud slip 'is mem'ry in time, as it were," said Mrs. Gale, faintly.

"A joke like that 'ere 'ud never slip John's mem'ry," replied Mrs. Bings. "It 'ill come hup laughable again an' again, which a witsomer man than John you couldn't wish to meet. 'Is 'ead's wonderful for sech things. Goo'-night, Mrs. Gale."

In the cold grey dawn, that had but just slipped over the hills near the village, two people suddenly met each other next morning. The encounter caused both of them unbounded surprise, not unmixed with horror; but while on the face of the young man who had dropped into the road over the fence, relief, after the first moment, was mingled with vanishing alarm, the countenance of the old woman at whose feet he had alighted remained petrified with dismay.

"Well, of hall the rum starts," ejaculated the young man. "Blessed if I didn't think I was jumping clean into the keeper."

Mrs. Gale knew the speaker in an instant, though she had not seen him since he emigrated. The extraordinarily sweet eyes and face, which had smoothed his dare-devil path for him ever since they inspired a softened workhouse matron to christen him Angelo, were unaltered and unmistakable.

"Hangelo!" she gasped, with a fearful start, and let slip the corners of her apron. Down rolled its contents all over the road.

"Well, I'm jiggered. What in blazes d'you do that for?" said Angelo.

"Ush," faltered Mrs. Gale, gazing at him with the fascination of terror, and revealing the full horror of the situation in one irresistible outburst. "I've been stealin'."

So had Angelo. The satisfied eye of the lurcher at his heels and the bulging pockets of his old coat testified with what success.

Two thieves gazed at each other in the soft grey light, while the third wagged a congratulatory tail; and splash went the damp from the long yellow tips of the few remaining chestnut leaves still hanging scantily in the mists of the bordering copse.

Suddenly Mrs. Gale's eyes widened; her features worked, her expression changed from consternation to horror. She looked like one suddenly awakened from sleep.

"I'm a thief," she said faintly, and burst into tears.

"As it only jus' struck you, as it were?" enquired Angelo, but Mrs. Gale was unable to make any coherent answer. She wept passionately in the midst of the scattered contents of her apron, while the lurcher, in a frenzy of agitated astonishment that anyone should make such an unnecessary mistake as to mourn in a world where rabbits were so plentiful, leapt wildly in the air in a mad endeavour to lick her face.

"Well, this 'ere certingly his a rum start," said Angelo again, with deep conviction. He set his traps and encumbrances in the road, drew forth a large red handkerchief, and, without embarrassment, and in a forcible and businesslike manner, proceeded to swathe Mrs. Gale's countenance in its folds.

"Them as steals generally is thieves," he remarked, "or so considered. There aint nothin' to be serprised hover in that 'ere. It 'ud reelly be more serprisin' if they wasn't, you know. Come now, ole lady, stop 'owlin'. Since you're not the keeper—which certingly nothin' could be further—and I'm not the bobby—why 'owl? Wimming don't usually cry when they meets me, though I might perreps 'a' broke meself more gradual on the sight this time, so to speak."

"I aint ser much 'owlin' at you, Hangelo," gasped Mrs. Gale, struggling for self-control behind the handkerchief. "I wouldn't be ser rewde."

"That's a comfit," said Angelo. "I'm sure I bows towards you. An' what's hall these 'ere hunions?"

"They aint hunions," said Mrs. Gale, emerging with a scandalised countenance; "they're rootsis—garding rootsis."

"Where from?" asked Angelo.

Mrs. Gale's features worked anew.

"From Major Pym's," she sobbed. "Oh, Hangelo, if you tells on me, I'll die."

"Tell!" said Angelo. "'Oo'd tell? Look 'ere."

He opened his pockets.

"Them's Pym's, too," he said with a laugh. "When you tells on my rebbits, I'll tell on your rootsis. See? Now let's pick 'em up an' get 'ome afore we're both on us copped. I'll 'elp you with 'em."

"We're a pair of thieves, Hangelo," faltered Mrs. Gale.

"An' a very 'andsome pair, too," said Angelo, commencing to collect the scattered bulbs. "I never want to see blewer heyes in hany woman's 'ead."

But in spite of the reassuring tone of this remark, Mrs. Gale's tears continued to stream, and after a brief moment of struggle she disappeared again behind the handkerchief and emitted a yet heavier sob, to the unspeakable agitation of the lurcher.

"Well, you can 'owl," said Angelo, pausing in his occupation. "What's the matter with you, hey? What am I to do for you, hey?"

"I'm a thief," wailed Mrs. Gale.

"Fur be it from me to contradick you," said Angelo. "It certingly does look a little like it; but, if so, don' you tin' yourself able to get over that 'ere, as it were?"

"No," sobbed Mrs. Gale.

"Perreps it 'ill come heasier later on," suggested Angelo.

"It never, never will," gasped Mrs. Gale. "The way you come a-droppin' down at me feet jus' now, as it might 'a' been Elijah, 'as brought it all 'ome to me that dreadful which I can't think why it never come 'ome to me before. But the scoffs of me nex'-dore neighbour was sech—"

"No wonder you was startled if you took me for Elijah," said Angelo, meditatively, "which is a thing as 'as never 'appinged to me before. But I hallways thought Elijah was an 'oly ole man as went the hother way, so to speak."

"It won't come round 'owever I digs," sobbed Mrs. Gale, "though the rootsis mus' be wonerful thick. An' what with Charles a-lookin' 'orf that hanxious from 'is musick, an' me nex'-dore neighbour that set in 'is opinions, an' no one takin' the leas' notice of hany of me prayers up above, I didn't see 'ow I could bear it no longer. But oh, whatever Charles 'ill feel a-glancin' 'orf from a twiddlin' of 'is golding 'arp an' a-seein' of me thievin', I don't dare to think. Which it 'ill kill 'im."

"'Oo's Charles?" enquired Angelo, straightening himself with a swift glance round.

"Charles in 'Eving," sobbed Mrs. Gale.

"Oh," said Angelo. "Well, that's a nice safe far-away place both for 'im an' us."

"I 'aven't said me prayers for weeks together," faltered Mrs. Gale, "a-trustin' himpious in the coal-shovel, as this is where it hends. Oh, 'ow shell I hever face the curick as 'as hallways been that constant among me little mercies!"

Here she raised her voice on a note of such nerve-rending height that the lurcher flung a passionate nose to the sky, and gave vent to his lacerated feelings in a despairing howl. Angelo regarded her with a perplexed frown.

"Look 'ere," he said, "don't 'owl like that. What's the good of spoilin' a pair of pretty heyes? Will these 'ere hunions grow if they're put back?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Gale, pausing in her wails and looking at him apprehensively, "if they're set careful."

"Well, s'pose I go an' put 'em back," said Angelo. "Then you won't be a thief no more, an' you needn't cry no more."

There was a moment's silence. Mrs. Gale's features worked again with conflicting emotions.

"The scoffs of me nex'-dore neighbour is sech—" she faltered.

"'Oo's 'e?" asked Angelo.

"John Bings," replied Mrs. Gale, with a sob.

"The man I thrashed yesterday," said Angelo, with the air of one who has discovered a pleasing reminiscent link. "Well, 'e won't scoff at you no more, once I tells 'im what 'ill 'appin' hotherwise."

But still Mrs. Gale hesitated. "If you puts 'em back—" she said.

"Well?" said Angelo.

"There's Charles," said Mrs. Gale, brokenly.

"Charles in 'Eving?" enquired Angelo. "But it seems to me 'e's got to be hupset any'ow."

"The garding looks that bare all on a sudding," gasped Mrs. Gale, "an', oh, it must go to 'is 'art dreadful."

She gazed up at Angelo with tears of anguish streaming down her cheeks, and Angelo looked down at her.

Mrs. Gale always looked at men with anxious hope, as though, in a world full of pitfalls and sudden castings down, they alone, if they would be so kind, could explain everything, arrange everything, and mend everything for her.

"You go 'ome an' get some food inside of yourself," said Angelo, suddenly. "Hanythink ser 'ungry-lookin' an' scared I never see. I'm a-goin' to put these 'ere hunions back, an'

then I'm comin' to see the garding meself. A person as sees Elijah a-leapin' over 'edges an' a-bringin' 'ome their sins to 'em on the 'igh-roads like this 'ere won't never make a livin' at thievin', an' it's bes' not to fight again' the trewth, if disappointin'. We'll see if we can't do somethink for the garding an' for Charles in 'Eving, an' perreps for Bings too, as isn't in 'Eving, nor hever likely to be. You leave orf 'owlin' over your sins, which if I puts these 'ere hunions back you won't 'ave any to 'owl over, an' go 'ome an' get some food inside yourself."

"Are you goin' to put them rebbits back, too, Hangelo?" asked Mrs. Gale, timidly.

"Now, I harsk you," said Angelo, strongly, "am I a-owlin' because I'm a thief?"

"No," said Mrs. Gale.

"Do I look as if I should ever 'owl for hanythink so stoopid?" demanded Angelo.

"No, Hangelo," replied Mrs. Gale, truthfully.

"Jusso," said Angelo. "Now you go 'ome."

A few days later Mr. Bings, hoeing in his own domain, heard again the sounds of gardening on the other side of the privet hedge. He paused; a slow grin overspread his countenance. He laid down his hoe and moved on unwieldy tip-toes across the garden. His red countenance appeared suddenly over the green barrier.

"Rootsis a-comin' on, hey?" he began, and stopped short with his mouth open.

"The rootsis is comin' on very 'andsome, thank you, Mr. Bings," said Angelo, slowly rising on the other side of the hedge.

"Oh, ah," said Mr. Bings.

"An' somethink helse might be comin' on too, as perreps you don' heggspec' quite ser much as the rootsis," said Angelo, resting a foot on his fork and an elbow on its handle, and fixing a cold eye on Mr. Bings.

"I'm sure I'm not heggspectin' nothin' that I'm aweer of, Hangelo," replied Mr. Bings, loftily.

"It 'ill be the more surprisin' when it comes then," said Angelo, "as it's likely to do sudding, if I sees that there warmin'-pan of a face of yours a-smilin' over the 'edge again, which no wonder the rootsis 'ad a difficulty in comin' up."

"Ha, ha," laughed Mr. Bings, "you will 'ave your little joke, Hangelo."

"Mine's the same joke as Mrs. Gale's," said Angelo; "it's a good joke on the 'ole. We larfs at it sometimes together, she an' me. I don' know if it 'ud amuse you much, but if you stops where you h'are much longer, you'll 'ave a chanst of tryin'."

"I 'ope I 'as the right to stand in me own garding," said Mr. Bings, taking a dignified step backwards as Angelo drew slowly nearer the hedge.

"Oh, certingly; but if you 'as a fancy for standin' in it, perreps you'd better choose another part," said Angelo, beginning carelessly to draw off his coat. "It's 'ardly what you'll find yourself a-doin' of long in the part you're on now. There aint an ole woman on this side of the 'edge to-day, John Bings."

"I'm sure I never meant nothink to 'arm the ole woman," said Mr. Bings, in an injured tone of voice. "Hanythink kinder than I've been to 'er it would be 'ard to meet in a day's march, an' she a-watchin' to see me pass 'er 'ouse in the way she does."

"She's pleased to see the back of you, as anyone might be a-knowin' what was on the hother side," said Angelo. "Now get out—d'you 'ear? Get, afore I comes over and kicks you out."

"I'm a-goin'," replied Mr. Bings, with several rather less dignified steps backwards at the sudden fierceness which accompanied Angelo's last remarks. "I've no wish to stay where I'm not wanted, Hangelo."

"You can't 'elp doin' that so long as you're hanywhere," said Angelo.

Inside her kitchen Mrs. Gale, with her back to the window, prayed earnestly against too keen an enjoyment of her enemy's discomfiture.

"Which little do I deserve it hafter the way I trustid himpious to the coal-shovel," she explained, with tears, to Mrs. Bings, who, revolved around by the meditative Tommy, came drifting swiftly in to discover what had happened, her husband, beyond an embittered blow or two, having vouchsafed no explanation of his sudden hoeless return from gardening, "an' all the while the hanswer to me prayers a-rushin' along from 'Eving in the way 'e was, which we met quite hurexpected a few mornin's back, an' 'e kindly offered to come in an' 'elp me with the garding a bit, 'earin' I'd got a little be'ind'and, as it were. Never 'ave I seen a better digger, hexceptin' Charles 'isself, which, of course, is hall the garding wanted, an' there's sevril rootsis a-showin' already, as mus' 'ave been close on top. I think I eard Hangelo heggspplainin' of it gentle to your 'usbing, Mrs. Bings, an' I'm sure I'm mos' willin' to hoverlook 'is little fault, which hall can't be heggspectid to understand gardinin' like I do meself."

In the days that ensued, rebbits and rootsis mingled in happy promiscuity in the all-embracing pockets of Angelo's old coat, which were like charity in that they certainly covered a multitude of sins.

Finding honesty an excellent policy to pursue hand in hand with others less officially recognised, Angelo made great friends with the gardeners of the chief families about the place. They thought him a singularly amiable and intelligent young fellow, with a taste for gardening, and an appreciation of other people's talents in that line which deserved to be encouraged; and Angelo begged from them by day, and stole from them by night, with equal satisfaction and success.

Then Charles's garden began to awake to its own long-paralysed resources. Rootsis, that had been quiescent for years, began to stir below; enquiring shoots came pushing up to discover whether they really were going to be encouraged to remain when once arrived, and, finding themselves in good company, determined to stay for the season. Things far rarer than either Angelo or Mrs. Gale knew shouldered homely plants bestowed by interested neighbours, who at times bestowed also remarks and comments of a highly witty nature. To these Angelo paid small heed till, on one or two of them coming to Mrs. Gale's ears, she found herself obliged to retire to her room to weep and pray. Then the young man took to returning the chaff in kind, and added caustic personal comments of such accuracy and scope, that most of the jokers, indignant and surprised, retired also, though not exactly to pray.

Wherever Angelo dug, Mrs. Gale came digging after, as busy as he and fifty times more important, issuing commands which Angelo obeyed with mingled humour and vigour, while the lurcher, curled up on his master's coat, slept the sleep of those whose labours are by night, and spake in his dreams of the sweet reminiscences inspired by the odours of his couch.

The time came when Mrs. Gale used to watch for Mr. Bings across the privet hedge, and, drawing his attention by coughs and loud blowings of the nose, would engage him in artless conversations in which Mr. Bings found himself constrained to sustain his part with an unhappy politeness, and which always ended in the way the rootsis was a-comin' on.

"An' none on 'em's stolen, is they, Hangelo?" Mrs. Gale would ask with a cheerful laugh, as one who from a citadel of prayers, and mercies small and great, could afford to cast back a smile on darker days.

"Bless you, no," said Angelo, "the rootsis was wonerful thick; they only needed a little careful diggin'!"

A VISIT TO AN . . . ALTON HOP GARDEN

A THRIFTY housewife of a generation or so ago, whose "home-brewed" was proverbial for being "small" to a remarkable degree of tenuity, was once regal

ing an acquaintance with the contents of her choicest barrel. "What do you brew your beer with, missis?" she was asked. "Nothing but malt and hops, nothing but malt and hops," was the somewhat testy rejoinder. "Didn't you put in anything but malt and hops?" continued her guest. "Well, the water, of course; I forgot the water." "That I'll be bound you didn't!" was the emphatic and not over-complimentary reply. At the present moment in the districts in England where hops are grown, "nothing but hops," apart altogether from the question of the malt, would appear to be the prevailing sentiment.

Whatever ingredients are employed in the present processes of brewing must remain a dark secret, known only to the high magicians of the brewing mystery; but by the lay mind, at all events, hops are universally regarded as an indispensable ingredient. Year by year, as September draws near, a big exodus of hop-gatherers takes place from the poorer parts of London to the hop districts, and several London railway stations, particularly Blackfriars.



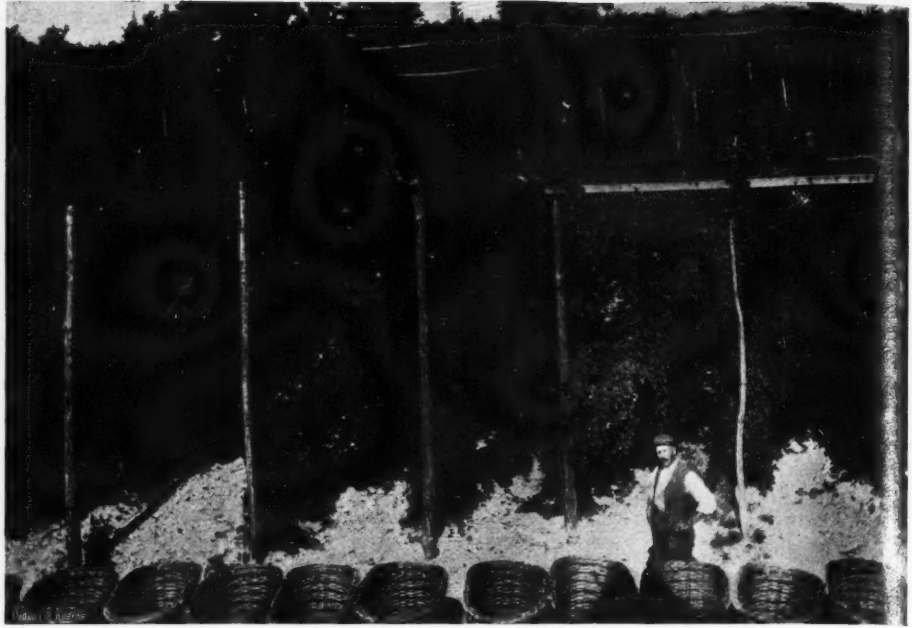
TIEING ON STRING.

become the scene of a noisy and turbulent carnival as the "hoppers" depart for their annual outing.

The county most associated with the cultivation of hops is the county of Kent ("The Garden of England"), but the industry is by no means confined to Kent. There are, in fact, two main districts in England where hops are grown—the South-Eastern and the West of England. The West of England, which is the less important, embraces Herefordshire, with the adjoining portions of Worcestershire and Shropshire. The South-Eastern district comprises the greater part of Kent, but is not confined to Kent alone, as portions of Surrey, Sussex, and Hampshire, between the North and South Downs, are included in it, and the district on the borders of Surrey and Hampshire, with Alton and Farnham as its chief centres, forms an important hop centre, where hops of the finest quality are extensively cultivated. Throughout these districts the local country-folk, just like the London hopper, look forward regularly every year to several weeks spent in the gardens. Both sexes, and all ages, share eagerly in the occupation; for labour of other kinds hands are procurable only with difficulty, and it is useless for the enquiring and anxious housekeeper to attempt to engage domestic servants while picking is in process.

Hops have been cultivated since early times, but the cultivated hop requires a soil possessing special and peculiar properties in order to bring it to perfection. It is essentially a mixture of soils, combined with a mild and genial climate, which the hop requires, and hop cultivation is therefore a geological rather than a purely geographical question.

Where formations of chalk or limestone crop out at the surface, in proximity with sand and clay, the soil derived



GROWING ON THE WIRE SYSTEM.

from the weathering and disintegration of the surface rocks will contain the necessary ingredients, and it is only where

this is the case that hop culture can be profitably carried out. These conditions exist in the South-Eastern hop district, where the outcrop of the chalk forms the elevated ridge known as the North Downs, followed on the southern side by the gault clay, lower greensand, and weald clay, which crop out in succession in parallel strips running nearly east and west. The geological structure remains practically unchanged from the South Foreland to the borders of Hampshire, and over this strip of country the hop



PICKING.

gardens are to sandstones of

be found. In Herefordshire the clays and the Devonian series are superimposed upon limestones and shales of earlier date, and in former days, when hops were grown on a much more widespread area than is now the case, the hop gardens were to be found in districts where somewhat similar conditions prevailed. Traces of this linger in the name The Hop Pole, as a sign frequently met with in country inns in such localities, and now the only surviving relic of what was once an extensive local industry. One such inn is the Hop Pole at Ollerton, in Nottinghamshire, well known to cyclists and tourists visiting Sherwood Forest. Here, also, the magnesian limestone crops out in a narrow band with sandstones and clays on either side, but the climate is not genial enough to mature the hops properly, and the hop gardens once cultivated are now no more. The absence of really suitable climatic conditions and the special nature of the soil requisite have, with the increase of transport facilities, foreign competition, and the decline of home brewing, caused the hop cultivation to dwindle and die out in other parts of the country, and it is now only in specially favoured localities that hops can still be profitably grown, and in these the



LOADING GREEN HOPS IN THE GARDEN.

hop culture is well established and thriving.

Hops derive their value for brewing as well as their tonic and medicinal properties from a bitter principle known as humulin or lupulin, which is found mixed with resinous matter in certain glands at the base of the flower, and known as the lupulinic glands. In winter and early spring an Alton hop garden is not an exhilarating sight. Rows upon rows of huge bare poles and their supporting wires are all that is to be seen, but as summer advances the poles become shrouded and festooned with the quickly-growing bine, with the dense masses of light green flower-heads showing conspicuously against the dark green foliage, and the general appearance is most attractive and pleasing. The season of hop-picking is *par excellence* the time for a visit to the gardens, which at this period present a scene varied and animated in the extreme. There are the pickers—young and old, men and women, boys and girls, all ages, and indeed all classes—busy, laughing, chattering, but all intent on the main business in hand, in groups round the large baskets into which the hops are to be gathered. A man pulls down the bine by means of a long pole with a hook at the end, and the ripened flower-heads are rapidly picked off into each basket until it is filled.

The capacity of the hop baskets is seven bushels, and with good pickers at work a basket will take two hours to fill. For this a price is paid ranging from 1½d. to 2½d. per bushel, a higher price being paid when the hops are small than when they are large. As the baskets are filled the contents are placed in sacks, and skewered up ready for transmission by the collecting van to the drying kiln.

Kilning or drying the hops is, next to cultivation, the most important operation of the industry, as the yield of the active hop principle, lupulin, depends very largely on the care and skill with which this is carried out. Mr. A. D. Hall has conducted an exhaustive series of experiments to test the yield of lupulin under different conditions of treatment. These experiments have served once more to illustrate the value of scientific research as applied to agricultural operations, and the yield of lupulin is found to be largely influenced by the way in which the process of kilning is conducted. Careful regulation both of the temperature and duration of the process is most essential, and a sample of hops which in one man's hands may turn out practically



W. T. Green.

SKEWERING THE HOPS.

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worthless may under different treatment give an abundant yield. In hop growing, as in dairy work, the thermometer, though still despised as new-fangled and unnecessary, is becoming more and more enthroned as the arbiter of fate. Few crops are cultivated largely which afford so fluctuating a yield as the hop. In 1900 the yield per acre was 6·78cwt., while that in 1901 was 12·70cwt., or nearly twice as great. Nor is this all, for on looking at individual counties the fluctuations are much greater. The Hampshire gardens varied from 5·5cwt. in 1900 to 14·6 in 1901. The hop is sensitive to climatic conditions, and to ensure good results highly favourable conditions are necessary at every stage of growth. Sharp cutting winds check the growth, bruise the bine, and discolour the hops. Large stretches of coarse netting are used in some gardens as a protection against this.

Unfavourable weather, too wet or too dry, usually the former, spoils the crop, but the worst enemy is the aphid or plant lice, which may render a whole season's growth not worth the picking. As a check to the depredations of the aphid the hop grower casts an approving eye upon the little ladybird, which will devour in a single day enormous numbers of this ruinous pest. On the other hand, the profit derived from one really good year is more than sufficient to outweigh the disappointments of several bad years. The year 1901 stands out as a very great year, fortunately; the best crops were grown in Hampshire, yielding 14·6cwt. per acre, followed by Sussex with 13·6cwt., the yield per acre in Kent being almost the least in the whole country.

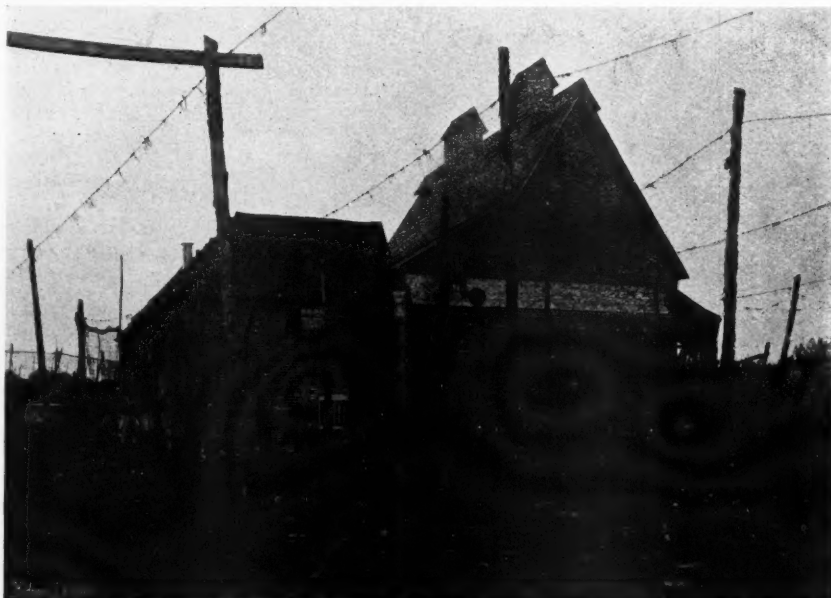
Many attempts have been made to find satisfactory substitutes for hops in brewing, but they have all so far proved inferior to the real article. The reason is, probably, that the hop not only provides the needful bitter principle, but it gives beer tonic properties in which the so-called hop substitutes are wanting. But apart from its ultimate destination, the cultivation of the hop affords a picturesque and attractive feature of the country-side. Many worse ways can be devised of spending a country holiday than that of staying at a farm or house in the hop country and joining in the occupation of hop gathering with the other members of the household. The amateur hop-picker may even earn a few shillings if so minded; but in any case the novelty and healthiness of the open-air occupation, and the constant interest afforded by the animated and yet restful scene, will linger as a pleasing memory long after the hops have been consigned to the brewer.

The illustrations were taken in the hop garden of Mr. Chalcraft at Alton, to whose courtesy the writer is greatly indebted.

VINCENT THORNE.



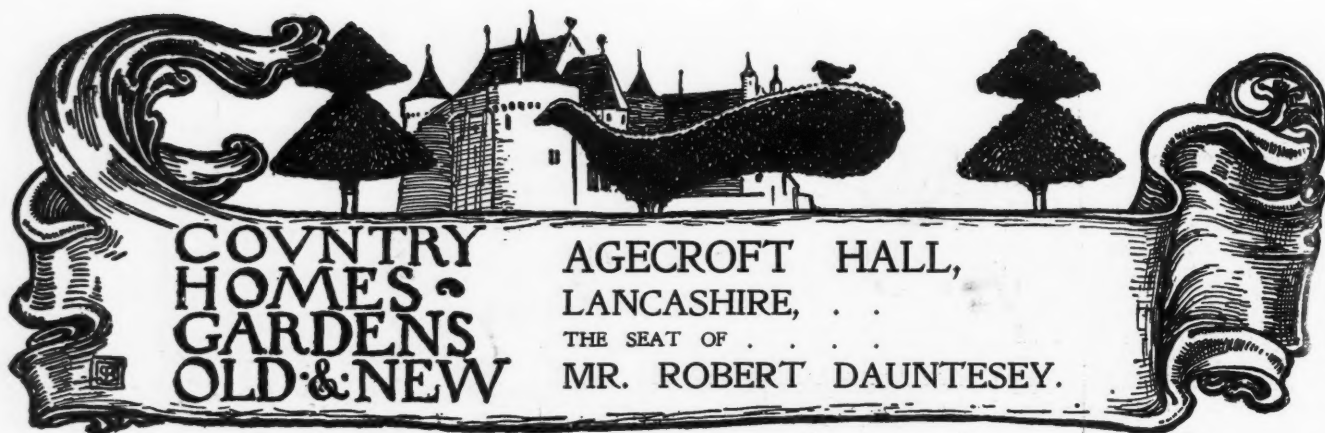
W. T. Green. THE TOOLS. Copyright



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THE KILN.

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AGECROFT HALL is one of those strongly individualised mansions of ancient date in which the county palatine of Lancaster is singularly rich. What that district of England may lack in the genial climate that vests the brick dwelling-places of Southern England with those lichens which, in their hues of orange, yellow, green, and grey, form so incomparable a vesture, it has compensation for in those "magpie" moated structures, impressive in time-worn oak, rich in beautiful carving, picturesque in their many gables and their grey slate roofs, which grow mellow under rain and sun. When such houses are valued and preserved like the old mansion house of Agecroft, and are made beautiful with gardens and pleasure grounds, they do most certainly deserve to hold a high place among the quaint and beautiful mansions of the shires. Agecroft is both fortunate and unfortunate—fortunate in the loving care which adds new beauty to its antiquity, unfortunate in the fact that the country thereabout is much given over to the busy whirl of modern things. Yet advantages may be won even where discouragement might prevail, and thus close

to Agecroft Hall is a pond or lake, formed by the sinking of the ground, owing to coal-mines below, and constituting a very pleasing feature amid the trees, overhung by flowering bushes in the garden. There are dead oaks, which have been killed, it is said, by the smoke and fumes from the chimney shafts of coal-mines in the vicinity. The Irwell flows near by. It is, in truth, somewhat lower down, a Stygian stream, bearing in waters no longer pellucid the waste products of many manufactures. Nevertheless, the course of the river in this part of the valley has considerable elements of beauty, and the winding stream, with overhanging woods, is not without attractions.

Agecroft Hall stands upon a low tongue of land which here stretches down from Pendlebury into the valley, and the house is probably, as the crow flies, not more than four miles from Manchester Cathedral. It is deserving of note that the ancient halls in this neighbourhood manifest a predilection on the part of their builders for the neighbourhood of rivers. It was convenient to have water near, and very often the stream possessed some advantages in the matter of defence. Ordsall Hall, Hulme Hall, Aldport Lodge,



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THE EAST FRONT.

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Ancoats Hall, Strangeways Hall, and the old baronial hall of the Gresleys were thus situated near the banks of the Irwell, the Medlock, and the Irk.

Since we are seeking not only the attractions of houses, but the beauties of gardens, it is also interesting to observe that near these ancient oaken structures we rarely find much in the way of formal gardening, and, save for a bridge or a garden seat, the architect seems rarely to have played a large part. Simplicity characterises the surroundings, and there is nothing to delay the pen in a description of the great charm of the lawns, flower-beds, and hedges. These are all-sufficient in their relationship to such houses, and none can deny that the pictures presented of house and garden are singularly sweet and attractive. The views of Agecroft Hall will show how, without great effort and without ambitious design, eminently satisfactory results are attained. Fortunately for this ancient place, it has fine trees in its neighbourhood, wherein rooks have built their nests, adding something of an air of dignity and antiquity by the presence of their busy colonies in the boughs.

And now, to suggest the character of this great class of Lancashire houses—and let it be said that Cheshire possesses



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THE TENNIS LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

them also—it may be useful to refer to several. Agecroft is a brother house to ancient Speke near Liverpool, and in its venerable confraternity are included such places as Smithells Hall, Samelsbury, Ordsall—the ancient residence of the Radcliffes, described in Harrison Ainsworth's "Guy Fawkes"—Crumpsall Old Hall, Haugh Hall, Barton Old Hall, Urmston Old Hall, Kersal Cell—a very pretty example of timber architecture quite near

to Agecroft—and many others. Some of these places are given over to the spirit of change, and Worsley Old Hall, though still standing in ancient style, is displaced as a residence by the more stately house of the Earl of Ellesmere. Indeed, the old halls, mansions, and manor houses which so greatly distinguish Lancashire are a mixed company. Many have fallen upon evil days, and are half ruined or divided into cottages; others have been swept away, leaving some fragment for memory; and comparatively few are those preserved like Agecroft Hall. In the northern part of the country the dwellings are more castle-like, but the typical Lancashire house is of timber, and belongs to the time of the Tudors or of James, and especially in South Lancashire and Cheshire possesses the general characteristics



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NORTH-WEST CORNER OF QUADRANGLE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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FROM THE STABLE-YARD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of the example we depict. They have bars, vertical and horizontal, angles and curves, oriel windows, and many gables to break the skyline. Inside are chambers and corridors, many and varied, and antique stairways leading to the upper storey. Everywhere is oak panelling, with fine carvings, and in the more dainty parts the wainscot is divided by fluted pilasters. A prodigious amount of oak has been employed in building a quadrangular house like Agecroft. It would almost suggest to us that a grove of oaks must have bowed beneath the woodman's axe ere that structure was raised, and the operation must have somewhat resembled the building of a great ship, for here too the seasoned timber was jointed and pegged to withstand the storms.

Agecroft occupies a somewhat peculiar position. On the west side is the edge of a steep cliff, and it would appear that the three remaining sides of the quadrangle were protected by the moat. The square is complete, and measures about rooft. externally, and the main gate, which has a beautiful Tudor arch, with a lovely oriel window over it, is on the east side. It would appear that a large part of the house was built

in the reign of Henry VII. or his successor, and the beautiful carving, of fine Perpendicular character, in the corbelling of the windows on the east front is very noteworthy. Owing to the effect of weather, the south face of the building has called for partial renewal, and not much of the ancient plaster-work remains, but the east façade is quite original.

Passing through the arch we reach the interior of the courtyard, which is picturesquely attractive. Opposite to us is the long window of the great hall, with magnificent decorative timber-work over it, the kitchen and offices and the servants' quarters to the right, and the family apartments on the left hand, with the chapel, now converted to the dining-room. Mr. H. Taylor, in his "Old Halls in Lancashire and Cheshire," says

that originally Agecroft had open galleries as corridors in one portion of the quadrangle, similar to those which may still be seen in many old hostleries; but with the exception of one short length, these are now enclosed. The interior has been a good deal modernised, and the great hall is now used as a billiard-room. It was doubtless inevitable that some changes should be introduced, but it is satisfactory to



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THE EAST FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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AGECROFT: ENGLISH OAK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

find the place so greatly valued and so well preserved. Inside such houses there is cheery warmth, and an aspect of friendly companionship around the well-arched fire-place, while, above, the antlers often speak of some success in the chase.

It is, however, time, having described the house itself, that we should say something about those who have lived therein. In 1327 John de Langley and Joan his wife paid a fine to William de

Langley, Rector of Middleton, for the manor of Pendlebury and other lands, and here the knightly family of Langley established itself, descended, as we are told, from the feudal house of Prestwich of Prestwich. To this family is said to have belonged Robert Langley, Bishop of Durham, Lord Chancellor of England, and a cardinal, who died in 1347. Some, indeed, say that he was a Langley of the county of Durham, but he was supervisor of the will of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, in 1399, and, by his will, left a number of books to the college of Manchester, in the foundation of which he had been concerned. In the windows of Agecroft Hall are portions of ancient glass, zealously protected by wire frames externally, in which are the bearings of the Langleys and of John of Gaunt. The house and estate came in



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ROOKS' NESTS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

1560, on the death of Sir Robert Langley, to his daughter and heiress Anne, who married Thomas Dauntsey, and thus Agecroft passed to the family which long continued to reside there. It was afterwards occupied by the Rev. Richard Buck, and there have been other occupants, but Mr. Robert Dauntsey is in possession, and the house is in good hands.

Enough has been said to indicate the character and history of Age-

croft Hall. It may be interesting to mention that at the bottom of the hill the Irwell is crossed by Agecroft Bridge, which leads to Kersal Moor, and that on the other side of the river is Kersal Cell, which has been alluded to, the old seat of the Byroms, and, until her death, the property of their descendant Miss Atherton. The river was once pure and well stocked with fish, but much more than a century ago pollution had set in. A certain Mr. Rasbotham, writing in 1786, said: "The river hath trout, shoulders, chubbs, dace, gudgeons, and eels. Salmon came to it before the establishment of the fishery at Warrington, higher than this township; but there is no such thing experienced at present." Those who know the Irwell will wonder that salmon should ever have visited its waters. That day is long past,



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EAST FRONT IN QUADRANGLE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

but we may hope that the ever-growing bustle of modern things may yet for centuries spare the ancient beauties of Agecroft Hall.

THE PRIMITIVE PAINTERS.

EXPERTS, amateurs, and critics have been travelling to Bruges from all parts of Europe throughout the summer to see the famous exhibition of Primitives. It is the most important collection of the kind that has ever been held, and to see it is a considerable asset to one's appreciation of this fascinating branch of Gothic art. To most people the works of the Van Eycks, Memling, Quentin Matsys, and Roger Van der Weyden sum up the school. But, in addition to these, there are names which, though little known outside their own country, rank high in the annals of painting. Conspicuous amongst them is that of Gérard David, who at the death of Memling filled his place in Bruges. There are also Pierre Christus, the only direct pupil of the Van Eycks; Hugues Van der Goes, that exquisite colourist; Jean de Maubeuge, Bernard Van Orley, Joachim Patenir of Dinant, the Claude Lorraine of the Netherlands, and many others. One can add to these a number of excellent artists, whose names are unknown to us, and whose personal histories are shrouded in mystery, but who have been handed down recognised only as the painters of some celebrated picture. For instance, the master of the "Mater Dolorosa," the master of "The Death of Mary," the master of the "Assumption," or the master "d'Oultremont." There is one picture by Marguerite Van Eyck, the sister of Hubert and Jean—the only woman artist of the Middle Ages whose work is known to us. This is the Marguerite Van Eyck who, with Gérard David, painter and illuminator, figures in Charles Reade's well-known novel, "The Cloister and the Hearth."

To see so many masterpieces in the country, and in no few instances in the very city, which gave them birth, adds largely to their enjoyment. Bruges, with her still green canals, her silent quays, and cobbled grass-grown streets, is the very centre for an exhibition of mediæval art. Something indescribable of the Middle Ages still lingers about those canals skirted by the shady lime-tree walks. And if, after gazing at the pictures, one's glance should wander to the old Flemish houses and red-tiled roofs beyond, it is no shock, for there one meets with the same stillness, the same old houses and canals, with their swans, as in the backgrounds of the primitive paintings.

Before speaking of this exhibition in detail, it would be as well to call to mind the important influence of the Low Countries in the fifteenth century. The great discovery of oil painting, which revolutionised Art throughout the world, sprang from the brothers Van Eyck; and in addition to this the practice of a more realistic treatment of natural form also found its impetus in them. Roger Van der Weyden held a school in Brussels to which students came from all parts of Germany. Italy gave up the use of fresco and adopted the more practical medium of oil paint—in fact, the power exercised by the school extended to all parts of Europe. Of the pictures, we may say that they have a savour peculiarly their own. They combine the most naive sincerity, the most devout religious spirit, with the greatest technical ability. This earnestness of feeling is common to the primitives in all countries; but it is indeed rare to see this expressed, not by childish stammering, but by the perfection of execution. The Flemish may well be called *the Primitives par excellence*. Where shall we find such admirable painting of detail, yet without sacrifice either of breadth or grandeur? Where look for such richness of tone and colour—such powerful draughtsmanship? For these qualities in particular the brothers Van Eyck are justly famous. There is but one work by Hubert, the older brother, and the venerable father of the school. It represents "The Three Marys at the Sepulchre." In the centre of the panel is the empty tomb, on which a white-robed angel sits. On the left are the three Marys listening to the words of the angel, whilst in the foreground are two sleeping guards. A third, in a high-peaked cap and wrapped in a green cloak, is seated on the



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DEAD OAKS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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AGECROFT: THE KITCHEN ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

right of the tomb. On the hills against the horizon there is a towered mediæval city. The impression of the dawn is conveyed with great power and truth to Nature, and the conception of the scene is all admirably dramatic and grave. The sleeping guards round the tomb show the degree to which Hubert had carried realism as early as 1410. These soldiers are painted with so much life and minute observation that one can almost hear them snore—more particularly the one in armour who has sunk into a kind of drunken sleep. The whole aspect of the picture is wonderfully rich and powerful both in tone and in colour, only revealing its early date by the perspective of the tomb. The famous polyptyque of the Mystic Lamb by the brothers is only represented by two of the wings—life-sized figures of Adam and Eve by Jean Van Eyck—a somewhat Gothic conception of male and female beauty. But there are many other works where the great power of Jean, the younger and more celebrated of the brothers, can be seen, notably in the well-known Bruges picture, "The Virgin and the Infant Christ, St. Donatien, St. George, and the Canon G. Van der Pacle." Here the usual arrangement of the Virgin enthroned under a canopy has been followed, with the saints standing on either side. The head of the Virgin is not beautiful, but the armour and extended hand of the figure of St. George are remarkably good, and the head of the Canon Van der Pacle is a justly celebrated piece of portraiture. A massive head full of life and energy, the sharply cut outlines almost foreshadow Holbein's drawings. The detailed wrinkles of the skin about the eyes and throat, and in the rather fat hands holding the book, are all executed with a marvellous power for this minute observation. Indeed, it is in this wonderful rendering of detail and in other technical qualities that Jean Van Eyck chiefly excels. For the union of these powers with a more tender and poetic spirit we must look to the work of Hans Memling. It is his name which stands foremost of all the Flemish primitives. In him we have the culmination of the Gothic temperament, its spontaneity, its almost rigid sincerity, combined with an absolute and profound devotion to plastic beauty. What could be more exquisite than his child-like Madonnas, with their long delicate hands, their girlish slight figures clad in simple close-fitting tunics? Fromentin said of these Madonnas: "We know their race—they are all princesses."

And princesses they well might be with whom Memling had associated when at the Court of Charles the Bold. In Jean Van Eyck, with all his genius, we may look in vain for that haunting *troubant* beauty which we find in Memling's pictures. His magnificent triptych of the "Marriage of St. Catherine," and the beautiful little shrine of St. Ursula, as well as several smaller but wonderfully exquisite triptychs, are all here—lent by the hospital of St. John of Bruges. There was a legend current that Memling, a sick and wounded soldier, a drunkard and a debauchee, destitute and wretched, had sought refuge at this same hospital of St. John, and that it was here that he painted these pictures for the brothers, out of gratitude for their kindness. It was not until 1861, owing to the researches of Mr. W. H. J. Weale in the archives of Bruges, that the legend was at last discredited. Though, to be sure, some recent art historians had already begun to look askance at the story when they recalled the beautiful and devout spirit revealed in the pictures.

After the Van Eycks and Memling the master who claims most attention is Gérard David. Amongst other works here there is a very beautiful triptych with the Baptism of Christ as a centre panel. The wings represent the *Donateur* and his wife protected by St. John and St. Elizabeth respectively. Gérard David's painting shows all the characteristics of the school—a skill in rendering detail almost equal to that of Jean Van Eyck, and added to this he has, like Memling, a very keen sensibility of the more subtle and spiritual aspects of life. Another picture by the same artist, and one which shows unusual power, is the "Playing of the Unjust Judge." This was one of two panels painted for the Town Hall of Bruges, but the subject is too painful to bear description.

We in England who are interested in the Flemish Primitives have every opportunity of knowing and studying their works. We possess, in the National Gallery, some of the rarest and most excellent examples of Memling and Van Eyck. This section is, in fact, the richest of all in our admirable collection at Trafalgar Square—a collection far too little known by a public which flocks in thousands to Burlington House in the month of May, to see works of comparatively no artistic merit.

THINGS ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

JUST before I started on my riding tour—which I am to tell of yet in a practical way as a finish to these papers—there was an incident in our family. I notice that these incidents have a cumulative development; they are not the sudden things they seem to a cursory eye; they tend to perfect themselves in midsummer, and they startle the beholder—particularly if that beholder be a parent; but looking back, you can see how they came to happen, and trace their root courses, for they have roots like any other live growth.

Our incident was Betty's first refusal of the Man from the Midlands. He got himself asked to stay. I say he did it, and he did it without any help from anybody, but undoubtedly I wrote the invitation. If you think of it, you cannot ask a person to stay without at least some shadow of reason—just good enough to take ink and put inside a neat note—for wanting him to come. In our case there was no reason whatever, except that we knew how terribly he wished to come. Still, I couldn't say that in a note; and I could not use our meagre partridges (for ours is the wrong corner of our county for partridges, and everybody knows it), especially to a man whose home fields are paved with partridges, so to speak, and whose cousin's place had the record shoot last year. Besides, Father does not care for shooting; he shoots purely out of kindness; he likes to come home, I suspect, and dwell upon the number of birds that got away. Then we are none of us awfully keen on games; it wasn't as if he were a lawn tennis enthusiast and Betty another. Not having brothers to do the asking makes it doubly hard for me. But I had abundance of help from the Man himself; there was no backwardness in coming forward about him. The thing achieved itself on the heavy ground of his interest in agriculture. Betty ran against him at the Bath and West, and they sat upon the teeth of a pale green American cultivator for about an hour before he led her up with "I've always heard about the shocking bad farming in your part of the world, but I've never had a chance to see it," to say—for what else could she say?—"better come and convince yourself that the very worst is true."

"May I?" cried the Man from the Midlands, in a large ecstasy.

"Why, yes," said Betty, who is not above using the prettier Americanisms, which sit delightfully upon her. Then I was able obediently to get off the usual sort of thing, and he replied with a rapidity that gave me the highest opinion of the Midlands postal service.

So he came—with such a lot of astonishing agricultural clothes as we had never seen before. We borrowed the Admiral's hunter, taking that hapless animal up from grass and striving to give the beast a figure that a girth would go round inside the bare ten days, and mounted him. In the cold, rainy, July weather, those two rode hither and thither, seeing farms and staring at stock; but it was leaning upon the walls of our own pig-sties that the proposal came off. He no doubt trusted to finding Betty in a soft and malleable mood in that, her favourite, neighbourhood. But he didn't. She refused him chiefly, as she has since explained, "from habit," for his attitude about pigs is very

sympathetic to her, and she thinks she could get accustomed to his never understanding anything she says on other less vital topics. A girl with a half-foreign background is at a dreadful disadvantage with the average Englishman, there's no doubt of it!

The quite inevitable thing happened, as is its usual tedious way. He unearthed a mother and a girl cousin, whom "he was certain she would find just her sort," and they asked her to stay in the Midlands and see his neighbourhood. The whole affair was so transparent that an owl at noonday would have seen it. They asked Esmeralda too; they "framed" (if I may use a splendid Yorkshireism which describes more than a local place in the language), they framed to ask Father and me too, but we knew how to protect ourselves. Esmeralda and Betty went, with a maid between them—a maid who does Betty's clothes badly and Esmeralda's chiffons well; a woman, in fact, who is capable of jamming opposing trees into Russian leather shooting boots. It is fun to see those two set off for a visit. They see the country with such different eyes; they take such totally divergent views of hats and boots and clothes. Esmeralda is like a French woman visiting at a chateau; such an elaborate effect of rusticity in her morning gowns; such masses of "bluets" in her hats; such gauze veils to swathe round them; such cunning frills of lace to droop over their brims. She is the only English woman I know who can carry off that effect in a hat which is the sempiternal note of summer across the Channel. Also she has feet that lose nothing of their slim beauty in white doeskin or grey suede. In the train they talked exclusively to each other of what a bore it was to have to go at all; but then that is the correct English frame of mind in which to approach a visit.

When they arrived they dodged the mother and cousin successfully, and went upstairs to organise their bedrooms. Betty is never certain there is enough air, and always has the dressing-table taken out of the window and most of the curtains taken down; and Esmeralda is always certain there is too much light to sleep by, and pins a travelling rug over the blind when she goes to bed, and not enough light to dress by, whereupon she arranges her candles and sets fire to things. When they get down to the drawing-room Esmeralda is a vision of loveliness, which strikes a cold chill to the hearts of all the other women, until they see Betty stride in in some appalling black net thing, which unbecomes her most consoling. Betty resents evening dress; what she describes as "the best end of the neck," a phrase invented, I believe, by the butcher in reference to a very useful cut of mutton, is a thing in which she takes no interest. But she makes up for it by a beautifully-made pair of low-heeled pumps—everything in the way of foot-gear she understands to its perfection—which leave her slight feet an unattainable ideal to other females. When they go to bed they share biscuits and raisins and chocolate, because they never think they are properly fed anywhere but at home.

The day after their arrival, the Man, who was nervously anxious to show that he wasn't cross at being refused, arranged the crack outing of his neighbourhood for them. He took them over eleven miles by motor to his cousin's magnificent place, which is one of the places in the Midlands. I gather, though

I have not seen it, very accurately from their descriptions the sort of place it is. If anybody came and said one had inherited it, one would simply cry with despair and helpless rage. It costs thousands and thousands a year to keep up, and nobody of average sensibility could ever live there for a moment. Three generations ago it was built by some ancestor who had Pugin on the brain. As a consequence it is everything a house never ought to be. The motor-car did well until they got to the middle of the winding avenue which climbs the big hill on which it stands, then the motor-car stood still and fizzed and whined, and everyone got out—to comfort it, as they said, not to be in the explosion, as was abundantly obvious.

It being wet, and Esmeralda having on the wrong shoes for walking, Betty alone set off to do the last mile to the house, for the Man, engaged in being desperately circumspect, did not like to abandon Betty's sister, and the "grooming-engineer" (as they called him) would not leave the car.

Imposing avenues swept up to the house, and large lawns, with bad Wellingtonias upon them, had to be circumvented; but finally Betty got opposite the moated front. She traversed three sides without finding a "front door." Finally, she came upon a tremendous arched approach—but it was filled in with a bit of tarred sheep-fencing and some barbed wire! Further exploration revealed a small door at the end of a drawbridge, and Betty rang a bell in a wall. Nothing happened. There was no sign of life on all the hundred and fifty yards of solemn stone front. She rang again. No dog barked. She surveyed the scene; she thought of trying the windows: she wondered where the stables were; where the kitchens; where the gardeners lived. She rang some more times. Then she took a walk around the place. She was in the frame of mind to enter a kitchen garden and eat gooseberries till somebody stopped her. She tried walking on the lawns to see if anyone would start up and complain. She looked about for a stone to throw at a window—the avenues were so well kept there were no stones. She wandered into the woods in the hope of meeting a keeper; she was met by nothing but a stench of the corpse fungus, that thing that makes you think there must be an undiscovered crime in the immediate neighbourhood, but which, when you look for it, nobody but a fly can find.

Having spent half-an-hour in the vicinity of this grandiose building, she was relieved to hear the recovered motor singing round a curve. The Man descended and opened the aforesaid door by its handle. "You've always got to find these people," said he, passing through; and they followed him by a small passage into the place. Acres of parquet and holland covers revealed an astonishing sequence of state apartments, in which a bathroom was always next a drawing-room, and a bedroom remote from everything. At last they reached the comfortless corner where his cousin manfully pursues the struggle for existence—a brave man, marvellously unblighted by his inheritance. Lunch followed—a cold lunch, which was meant to be hot, but had come such a fearful distance from the kitchens, and served by panting servants who had slithered over miles of parquet in the bringing of it. They saw the gardens after they had seen the galleries. The galleries were full of the things rich people give away because they can't bear them, and pictures which were "reputed" So-and-so's. The gardens were cheaply furnished forth with lobelia, Jacobinis, and calceolarias, with nicotianas behind. They saw the temples and pagodas and the tombs of dogs, and the fountains were turned on for them, and the cascades set spilling. Indifferent statuary looked out from amongst ill-considered planting. The Cousin, who admires Esmeralda enormously, essayed a few "easy" remarks, but her replies were choked by sobs.

"And what do you do here?" asked Betty, trying to be natural. The owner brightened.

"Well, it's rather good fun potting the rabbits on the lawns from my bedroom window," he made answer; and Betty said

she understood at that moment why the English conquer all over the world, wherever they go.

"And of course," he added, "I'm very seldom here. My little place in Warwickshire is where I mostly put up. This has to be kept going for the excursionists, you see, but I try to do it economically. We have seventeen considerable industrial centres within easy rail of us; the people must have somewhere to take their children and their ginger-beer bottles. You—you'd be awfully surprised if you knew our mechanics and miners and factory hands. They seem to like this place, do you know." He smiled nicely about it, but Betty says his smile haunts her still—it covered such a pitiful despair. She had an awful dream that night. Whether it was his lunch or the entrées at the mother's dinner—which were done by a raw but gallant cook in honour of the London guests, and were chiefly Crosse and Blackwell's olives with chopped ham and anchovies instead of stones in them, and little squares of veal covered with warm glue—she doesn't know. She dreamed that she was being conducted round that place by a man who had been a Socialist and lectured about the iniquity of private ownership of land and the unequal division of earthly goods. He tore open his dark blue shirt, cast from him his scarlet tie, and stamped with Jaeger shoes upon his Karl Marx hat; he recanted the faith of his manhood; he cursed his instructors and all the great German names.

"For twenty years," he shrieked, "have I been an ardent Fabian and spoken every Sunday at the corner of Hammersmith Bridge against one man owning *all* of a thing like *this*! If I had had any success, if only one had listened, if I had convinced a proportion of the population, such burdens might have been thrown upon the millions instead of being carried by one miserable slave—their owner! Just Heaven! I might have upset the beneficent arrangement which decrees only *one* human sacrifice on each of these altars." And he kept dragging her onwards by the arm, and railing at his fellow-workers in what had been to him a sacred cause, till at last he sank exhausted upon a perfect plantation of the smell fungus, declaring that he should henceforth live to interrupt all Socialist meetings from the back of the hall, for he saw now that the social fabric was a wise construction, and that God was very good!

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

A TRUE judgment of man's "wisdom for himself" will usually be reached by presuming, in the absence of strong evidence to the contrary, that he himself best understands the exigencies of his own business. But, as a very literary contemporary was compelled to point out recently to a publisher who complained of delayed reviews, there really is more than a little evidence to the contrary in the case of the publishers. They have been, perhaps, a degree wiser during the past summer than in previous years—that is to say, they have not left the reading public entirely without light literature during months of inclement weather which often made reading the only available occupation; but still the last week or two have seen the printing presses in activity comparable to that of Mont Pelée, and the result is an alarming accumulation of books, hot from the press. To deal with them all, save by way of mere catalogue, for which the advertisements suffice, is physically impossible even for a purely literary paper. It follows that in these pages some must be delayed, and that only the most striking can be reserved for special treatment.

Of the whole mass, in my judgment, *The Hole in the Wall*, by Mr. Arthur Morrison (Methuen), is the most noteworthy. It marks a distinct advance in the art of one of the most original and individual of our younger novelists. It contains a series of scenes reproduced with consummate skill in vivid language, bound together by a thread of plot which, if it



Miss A. Hughes. *LADY MARJORIE MANNERS*. 52, Gower St.

be a trifle melodramatic at times, is none the less intensely interesting. The work is, fortunately, like that of no other writer living or dead; but it reminds one of many writers at their best. Eugène Sue, for example, created a character not unlike to Fiddler George, the horrible blind man of the East End, who appears in these pages, but Mr. Morrison would have imagined his character if Sue had not written a line. George Eliot has described to perfection the conversation of aunts of the lower middle-class over funeral bakemeats and an orphan, but Mr. Morrison's description of a like dialogue is fresh and complete none the less. He understands the water-side population of Wapping and its environs as well as Mr. Jacobs; and if he is less funny in dealing with these strange folk, he is more forcible than Mr. Jacobs himself. When he is in the mood for ghastly realism he is almost the equal of Zola and quite comparable to Edgar Allan Poe. These are words of strong praise, of course, but they are a candid tribute.

For the story, it is clearly conceived and told. Stephen Kemp, the small boy who tells the story for the most part, is the grandson of Nathaniel Kemp, the Grandfather Nat of the tale, ex-master of sundry small merchant raft, landlord of the Hole in the Wall Tavern at Wapping. He is the son of his mother, and of Nathaniel Kemp the second, mate of the Juno, a "coffin-ship" of the old type, owned by Marr and Viney, low-class owners—also, it is to be hoped, of the old type. The story opens with the death of the boy's mother in childbirth, while his father is away at sea, and with his Aunt Martha's pronouncement over the aforesaid bakemeats and the orphan, that "it's not to be expected that his mother's relations can be burdened with him"; so that the boy is left to Grandfather Nat. With him Stephen proceeds to the Hole in the Wall, where he sees some curious things without realising them, amongst them being the inner workings of his grandfather's business as a clever receiver of smuggled tobacco and stolen goods. Meanwhile, the other side of the story—the side which is to give it horror as well as sadness—is working itself out. Marr and Viney, being hopelessly insolvent, have long ago resolved to "pile up," otherwise scuttle, the Juno for the sake of the insurance, a fact of which Grandfather Nat becomes aware through a letter from his son, which reaches him too late. But, before that relief of their difficulties comes, they are compelled to file their petition, and they plot between themselves that Marr shall disappear with the available cash of the firm, £800 odd, and lie perdu in the East End until Viney can join him after the bankruptcy proceedings are over. But Marr gets drunk and babbling in the company of Dan Ogle of the Blue Gate—a gruesome thoroughfare, wonderfully described—of Dan's female companion, Margaret Flynn or Musky Mag, of a broken-nosed ruffian named Bob Kipps, and of Fiddler George. Naturally Marr is murdered, his body being thrown into the river.

Then, one evening, while the boy—grandfather Nat is no

scholar—is spelling his way through the columns of *Lloyd's List* for news of the Juno, in the bar parlour of the Hole in the Wall, murder is done on the threshold of the tavern, and as Grandfather Nat (who, by the way, is of Herculean strength) darts after the murderer, the latter drops something which Stephen picks up, believing it to be his grandfather's tobacco pouch. The murderer escapes, the tobacco pouch turns out to be Marr's pocket-book, containing the £800 in notes, which Grandfather Nat annexes, intending to hold it in trust, for the boy. The murdered man is Bob Kipps, another example of the fallacy of the saying that there is honour among thieves, and the murderer is Dan Ogle, who lies hidden in a disused shed at a lime wharf on the Lea, which belongs to Grandfather Nat.

A double inquest follows at the Hole in the Wall, for Marr's body is found tangled in the hawser of a lighter close by, and the egregious conceit of "Mr. Cripps," a bar loafer of the tavern, who swears he could identify the murderer whom he never saw, threatens to rob justice by putting the police off the track. But, as luck will have it, Mrs. Grimes, the charwoman-housekeeper and hag who cleans the Hole in the Wall, discovers the existence of the notes, and is detected in the act of attempting to carry away the cash-box containing them in a scuttle of rubbish. She is dismissed, of course, but Grandfather Nat has reasons abundant for not calling in the police, and the rest of the book is occupied with the machinations of Viney, Dan Ogle, Fiddler George, and Mrs. Grimes, separately and in various combinations, in which perfidy is the rule, to obtain the money or vengeance. In these there are intricacies innumerable. Viney, for example, has a hold over Grandfather Nat from knowledge of an awkward incident in his past career, and there are various relationships between the scoundrels, male and female. It involves, also, horrors innumerable, including a conspiracy to murder Grandfather Nat between Viney and Dan Ogle, and the blinding of Dan Ogle by Fiddler George with quicklime in the night, a ghastly scene, rendered with the relentless power of Edgar Allan Poe himself. But to tell of all these things would perhaps hardly be fair, and, in any case, space would not permit it.

The climax is the repentance of Grandfather Nat, brought about partly by the constant presence of the innocent boy, partly by the news of his son's death through the machinations of Viney and Marr. It produces a terrifically dramatic end to the story, but, sorely tempted as I am, I will not tell it in detail. Thus much only shall be written for the sake of those weak but intelligible persons who do not like stories to end unhappily. Justice is done to all except Grandfather Nat, whom one has learned to love in spite of a more than considerable spice of rascality, and every incident in the working of justice is of the most exciting quality. To sum it up, this is, on the one hand, a sensational novel, and entitled to a hearty welcome on that ground alone, and on the other hand it is marked by no common measure of literary excellence.

CYGNUS.

LORD RIPON'S PARTRIDGES.

IN a recent number it was our privilege to show some photographs of Lord Ripon's grouse shooting.

Almost immediately after this, Lord Ripon, with Lord de Grey, had a quiet bye-day at partridges, more with the idea of finding out what the birds were like than anything else. A big bag was not expected, and unfortunately the most gloomy prophets had not under-estimated the damage done to the early broods by the inclement weather during the nesting season. As Lord Ripon's keeper said, "good roots, bad birds," is a rule which has very few exceptions. The weather which suits the growing turnip is exactly the opposite from the warm, dry days which enable a sitting partridge to hatch out a large proportion of her eggs, and to afterwards rear her brood successfully. On this occasion the truth of the saying was amply proved, for there were many barren pairs, and the coveys of early birds were exceedingly small, while those hatched later were weak on the wing, and under-sized. The latter, however, may afford better sport as the season progresses; but undoubtedly this year must prove one of the worst on record.

The start was made from a point on the Dishforth Road, about two miles out of Ripon, and the day was one of the few really good ones which have been vouchsafed to us



W. A. Rouch.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON AND HIS LOADER.

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this September, so that though the sport was not all that might be desired, there were certain compensations. The country, for instance, is in one of the prettiest parts of Yorkshire, and the standing corn, if it somewhat interfered with



W. A. Rouch.

TOO HOT TO HURRY.

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the operation on hand, certainly added to the beauty of the scenery. And, after all, it is questionable if the slaughter of a vast head of game is essential to the enjoyment of a day's shooting. On a bye-day like this the responsibility of killing every bird which offers a fair opportunity does not oppress the moderate shot, though with such experts as Lord de Grey and Lord Ripon this consideration must weigh lightly. The

picture of Lord Ripon seated comfortably, surrounded by sheaves of golden corn, in no way suggests the anxiety which so frequently proves the bane of a less experienced sportsman. The attitude of the loader, too, shows that he understands his business well. The only member of the group who seems in any way excited is the retriever. He is probably a young dog, and an informal day like this will

do much to complete his education, for there is none of the rush and hurry inseparable from a great occasion, and there is time to pick up every wounded bird, no matter how carefully it is hidden and how puzzling the scent may be. There is nothing that gives a dog more confidence than to be left alone to find a bird which he knows has dropped somewhere in the vicinity, but has disappeared in a mysterious manner, and left no scent to trace it by. Partridges seem to have this faculty to a much greater extent than any other game bird, except perhaps a woodcock, or it may be that very often they have been feeding over ground on which they fall, and the dog can find no definite trail to go by. At any rate, there is no better opportunity for a dog to learn his duties than on a day like the one under notice, when the keeper has leisure to devote a considerable amount of attention to him, and is not tempted to rate him impatiently for not immediately finding a bird which dropped like a stone, but may have covered a considerable amount of ground before the dog arrived on the spot where he fell. Lord Ripon's keeper, as will be seen

straight towards him. The shouts which beaters always raise on the sight of "a cock forrard" rather flustered the novice, but the bird certainly towered and fell in a patch of birches about 200 yds. away. The old bitch went straight to the spot, but could make nothing of it, although she refused to leave until a fresh beat was tried. This finished the day's work, and the under-keeper, who had left before the bag had been reckoned up, arrived in a breathless

condition to announce that the cock had been found hanging in a forked branch about 8 ft. from the ground, and "t' owd bitch standing under him like a pointer."

Another of the pictures shows Lord de Grey firing right over our artist's head, and in the meantime being shot himself, though by a less deadly weapon. The presence of a camera in the line of fire would probably have affected the

nerves of most sportsmen, and the operator would have been in a position of considerable danger, but the only thing that was injured was the bird. It is scarcely necessary to draw attention to the shooter's attitude, which could not possibly be improved upon. The loader standing behind is as expert in his own calling as his master; one hand is ready to receive the empty gun, the other to pass the loaded one to his



W. A. Rouch.

JUST OVER THE ARTIST'S HEAD.

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W. A. Rouch.

A VERY USEFUL DOG.

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master. The dog behind is evidently as much interested as anyone, and eagerly waits for the word of command to begin his part of the work.

AN ASSOCIATION OF SHOOTING LESSEES.

THE proposal made to form a "shooting exchange" advocated by several correspondents has been considered in a number of COUNTRY LIFE. But it will not be out of place to quote here a few instances of the value which a kind of bureau of shootings kept for the use of subscribers might prove to have, as set out in a communication from a Scotch lessee. "In the first place, it would bring together the best class of letters and hirers of shootings, for the latter would in a very few seasons establish a list of satisfactory shootings, and of lessees able and willing to promote their tenants' sport. The register would naturally grow each season, all shootings of which there was no complaint finding a ready place there, and the letters of them being able to refer to the society to corroborate facts as to bags and facilities generally. Its main purpose would be to guarantee the accuracy of past bags; but it would also serve a very considerable class of letters and hirers by putting on record the facts attending



W. A. Rouch.

"THESE FLY BETTER."

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to a society of some hundreds of members, he could make his wants known to a vastly larger circle, and by asking to be referred to other members of the association could probably obtain satisfactory assurances as to the proposed tenant, who in return could have the usual data about the shooting at his disposal.

Though fishing clubs are a practical success in England, and a real boon to sportsmen, continued shootings, other than a small partnership among friends and acquaintances, are not yet a British institution. Some of the Yorkshire moors are rented by shooting associations, which are found to work well. But we have never tried anything on the scale of the clubs for shooting, and incidentally for fishing, which exist in America. For one thing, there is nothing like the elbow-room available for club shoots. An American game club will take up a very large area of country, where that is still possible by the State law. It builds a large club-house, with camping bungalows on the different beats in the forests, establishes a regular tariff for catering, and does things in a thoroughly businesslike way. Deer form the bulk of the big game on these shoots. Winged game is on the whole growing less plentiful, except ducks. The duck-shooting clubs are perhaps the most popular of any, renting many miles of river and marsh, where first-rate

sport is to be had when the duck are travelling north up the lines of the great central rivers of the States.

OCTOBER PHEASANTS.

THIS week a great deal of pretty sport has been had round "borders" and outside on the pretty Sussex "shaws" shooting wild pheasants. The early hatched birds are quite big enough to kill, and though the shots are not so satisfactory as those at the rocketers later, there is plenty of enjoyment to be had in these quiet mixed days. This year there are immense quantities of late blackberries in the hedges, which tempt the old cocks out of the coverts to feed on them. Hares also are still lying in the hedges and "shaws" where the corn was cut late. Times are certainly altered since the days when Lord Granville's ancestors were killing about one pheasant per gun in the big covert at Belvoir, for there are plenty of birds even on the outside.

THE DANGER OF MIXING 12-BORE AND 20-BORE CARTRIDGES.

We have received the following: "SIR,—Mr. Gilbert's unfortunate accident was due to a gun bursting. But the burst was not caused by bad manufacture, either of powder or gun. I gather that he had by accident cartridges for 12-bore and 20-bore calibre mixed up together in his bag. The result was that one of the small cartridges was slipped in by mistake, got pushed up into the barrel, and then was replaced by a 12-bore cartridge. The result was that the gun was double loaded and the burst occurred."

[This is a simple explanation, and marks a real danger. We have seen a case in which a similar accident only did not happen because the double load consisting of a 20-bore and a 12-bore cartridge was not fired.]

AN HISTORIC GUN ACCIDENT.

This letter recalls the authentic accounts of the way in which John Hampden met with his death, which was not caused by a shot from the enemy, as Clarendon states. His son-in-law had given him a brace of valuable pistols, bought in Paris. Armed with these in his holsters, he went into the fight at Chalgrove, where, on his firing at one of the enemy, the pistol burst in his hand. When lying very ill he asked his son-in-law, one of the Pyes of Faringdon, how he came to give him so badly-made a present. Pye said they were the best pistols he could buy, and asked for the other of the pair to be examined. It was found that it was nearly filled up to the muzzle with one charge rammed over another. Hampden had left it to his servant to load the pistol, which he did without drawing the other charge for several mornings.

[All enquiries under this heading to be addressed to the Shooting Editor.]



Rouch.

LORD RIPON'S PARTRIDGES: "IT FELL ABOUT HERE."

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the making of these bags. Every man of experience knows that, especially in the case of partridge shootings, and also when, unfortunately, there is disease among grouse, fluctuations of the bag may be due to causes not to be expected in every year. They may have been a bad hatch. Food may have been scarce in early summer. The ground, for domestic reasons, may not have been shot, or harvest may have been exceptionally late, or weather very bad on the days when the moor was first driven. It would be part of the work of the society to keep such pieces of information for the guidance of others hiring the ground, and to guarantee their accuracy to this extent, that they come from the previous lessee and with his authority. It is true that the lessee of a shooting can generally get an account from the last hirer. But this is usually no fair index to the general average of a moor, still less of low ground shooting."

It seems probable that when well established the members of the association might derive considerable advantage from the mere fact of being associated, even in this limited manner, for the purposes of information. It would be possible, for instance, for members who wish to exchange eggs for fresh stock to have a wide choice of districts from which to get their eggs, and to let their wants be known easily by registering them. Keepers and shooting quarters could often be found more satisfactorily if on the list of such a society, and members might often be able to effect partial lets or exchanges of shootings, things which are frequently most difficult for the isolated lessee to effect.

To quote one or two instances: A. may have a circle of perhaps a dozen acquaintances, whom he might possibly write to if he found himself sent abroad, or otherwise unable to shoot for the last half of a season. Very probably he has not that number. In any case, they might not want to take it on, and he would have to advertise, with the chance either of not getting a satisfactory answer, or of getting a tenant of whom he knows nothing, and whom he finds later is undesirable. If he belonged

STALKERS AND STALKED.

WHEN the ordinary, easy-going citizen, who has not a forest of his own, is asked by a hospitable friend to come North for a week or ten days' stalking, by far the best day on which he can arrive is a Thursday—that is, of course, presuming any liberty of choice is accorded him. The principle of selection is to spare, as far as may be, the thews and sinews of the easy-going citizen, which, it is quite certain, will in any case soon be aching sorely. The Thursday is the day especially to be recommended, because arrival on the Thursday means a stalk on the Friday and the Saturday, so that that third and worst day of aches and pains arrives on the Sunday, the day of rest. Of course everyone will not admit, without discussion, that the third is the worst day, and indeed you commonly hear fearful things said of "the first day on the hill," as if the first were in all respects the most trying; but though lungs may perhaps fail most hopelessly on the first day, there is an accumulation of tiredness and aches that makes the start on the third successive day without a break not altogether delightful. Once the hill is reached, and a "shootable" stag is spied, it is altogether another matter; aches and pains vanish by magic, and the easy-going citizen is another man again.

What aids so much in making these first days on the hill appear inordinately long and tiring is the length of journey and of time that it takes in getting to and from the ground—speaking of the generality of forests—in addition to the serious business of the day on the hill itself. In the South the easy-going citizen would deem himself to have done a good day's work if he had done only as much as the journey to and from the foot of the hill. There will be various distances to travel, various modes of conveyance, to different beats; to those nearest you may ride all the way, say a long and jolly six miles. To those that are furthest you may drive perhaps ten miles, with another two or three to ride at the end of the drive. Let us, by preference, take the long driving beat first—the jogging on a hill pony helps the stiffness that the Sunday's rest may overcome.

There, when you have come to your ground, you will see the stalker in the well-remembered attitude, seated, reclining well back in the heather, with one leg thrown over the other and foot waving in the air, spyglass steadied by crooked stick, spying the hill. "Have you seen anything?" you ask anxiously. "Aye, there's some awa' up on the hill yonder, but ah, they're a sma' beasts; there's no a 'shootable' stag amang them at a'." The mercury of the citizen stalker's hopes goes down to zero. "We'll just gae awa' up the hill a bit, and then we can see the corries and wait for any beasts coming in." So you tramp away up the hill, the Highlander going with his corky step, and you—well, the image of poor Mr. Briggs depicted by John Leech, prone in the heather, fanned by gillies and swarmed over by flies, comes strong to your imagination. But it is necessary for England's honour to struggle on regardless of the gentle dew falling from your face, while the stalker goes up and up without turning a hair. And presently, grateful for the blessed relief, you sit down, and presently you too, in the most approved attitude, begin to spy. Yes, there are the deer, on the hillside opposite. You are quite proud when you begin to see them out of your spyglass. The stags look more important to your longing eyes than they appear to the more critical regard of the professional. "Oh, aye!" he says, not without some implied scorn, in response to a question of yours, "there's just one decent beast amongst them, but he's no clean." Then you wish that the earth would swallow you, or that you never had been born, to arouse the scorn of the Scot for not noticing the velvet still on the "decent beast's" horns. There does not seem much to be done as you sit and spy and wait for some more "beasts" coming in, if they will be kind enough to do so. Some distraction is afforded by some more hinds and stags appearing on the skyline to the right up the far edge of your corrie, but here again there are no "shootable" or "suitable"—you may take this favourite epithet as you like—stags. The hillside opposite has several distinct herds upon it. There is no lack of deer, but the stag of fair bulk and fair head adornments is still to seek. After a while, it is decided to have an early lunch—sandwiches, ginger-snaps, whisky diluted with water from the burn. Keep some of the ginger-snaps—you may want them before the day is done. Also you may want more whisky; cherish that national beverage—it is very comforting.

After luncheon you begin moving up the corrie to see whether there is anything more promising to come in. Even the movement is grateful, if only to get comparatively quit of the midges, which will have been lunching while you were lunching, treating you as you treated the sandwiches, etc. Up at the head of the glen are some great cairns of stones, and there an unfortunate fox-cub, evidently ill, and somewhat dazed, appears wandering aimlessly. (It will be evident by this time that the description is of a certain, actually enjoyed and suffered, first day.) The stalker tells you, with shameless confession, that

he killed a vixen and five cubs among these cairns this season. His nerves are not touched by the pang that even the most justifiable vulpecide causes the Southerner. As you regard him with a sad eye, suddenly he crouches, motioning you with frenzied Morse signals of a hand low held to do the same. "The rifle! gie me the rifle! quick!" he whispers. Then one of the two attendant gillies hands it to him. He loads it, while you, unaware of the cause of all this business, are in a tremble of nerves. But presently the cause is magnificently revealed. In single file, now and then broken, deer are coming in over the water-shed, coming, coming, perpetually coming. First they are hinds, and then a noble following of stags. It is breathless work. They do not pass near enough to give a shot, but only just out of reach of it. Lucky that we are among these big boulders that give cover. But they are near enough for us to see them distinctly; you do not see them as distinctly as the stalker, and his remarks are illuminating. "There's several nice beasts. There's one or two ten-pointers. There's a sma' royal. Aye, and there's a grand beast. That's the finest heid I've seen this year—an eleven-pointer. Aye, it's a grand beast." All this in a stage whisper—of which the tone alone, apart from the substance, is enough to make the most hardened heart beat fast. Presently all this magnificent *cortège* has passed, slowly, unconscious of you watching, round a shoulder of the hill. Then the stalker rises, with some glee. "We'll just go round by the top and come down on them."

It is generally a fearsome business when a Scottish stalker says "we'll just" do this or that piece of walking or climbing. The "just" seems like a bit of false suggestion on his part that it is a very little matter that is to be done, when he quite well knows that it is about the utmost trial of your powers. However, in course of time, after calling a halt once or twice, to ease your hammering heart and aching lungs, you get to the top, the stalker himself admitting "It's some steep, that." But he had not seemed to find it so. Then, with the keen air at between two and three thousand feet up in your face, and a magnificent panorama of loch, mountain, and cloud spread about you, you walk easily along the ridge top, now and then pausing for a spy down to find a good stag to shoot, and, if possible, your friend of the eleven points. "They're awa' down below us now," the stalker announces after one of those spies over the ridge top; and a moment later you too, permitted to spy, are feasting your eyes on the sight of some fine stags, amongst them one lying down that the stalker pronounces a "nice stag." "Not the eleven pointer?" you ask eagerly. No—it is no such luck as that, but such as it is take it and be thankful—it is a nice stag. It remains to get within shot of him.

The stalk, as stalks go, is not, in this instance, a difficult one. There is a while of wriggling down hill serpentwise, of progression on hands and knees, of much crouching; but in the end behold you arrived—arrived at a point some hundred and forty yards from your stag, who still lies in undisturbed security. Between him and you are some hinds, and you cannot move a step nearer. But there is a nice rest for your rifle on a boulder—put your cap or handkerchief between the stone and the barrel to prevent the latter jerking up ever so little as you fire—and as you look down and take a steady bead on the recumbent stag it seems impossible that you could miss the vital spot. "Shall I take him as he is?" you ask, in an agitated whisper. But the ordinary Scotch stalker has a rooted objection that seems almost like a superstition against the lying-down shot, and he whispers back, "Ye ken what to do yoursel' best, sir, but it is a far easier shot if ye wait for him to rise." That is the kind of answer that shifts a heavy responsibility to your shoulders. You have a sense that to miss after the thing has been put to you in that way would be terrible indeed. Let us wait, and meantime the midges wait on us also. Presently a hind moves on the right. It behoves us to be very careful, and probably the stag soon will be moving too. Then two stags which had been hidden get up further on the right again. The stalker inspects one of them a moment, and then says, "Ye can just take that first one, sir; he's as good a beast as him that's lying down." The critical moment has come. Above all, it is best not to hurry—to take time. Just as you are about to press the trigger the stag moves. You sight again, just behind the shoulder, and pull. Instantly all about you is a great commotion—all the deer jumping to their feet and scampering—then standing at gaze a moment—then off again. And the stag at which you fired has gone behind a great rock, moving just like the rest. "Did I miss him?" you ask in a voice of agony from the stalker. But there is no comfort in his face. "He has not come from behind that rock," you say resolutely. Then you go on—the stalker, you, and the gillie. The last spies him first. "He's there yet," he says, to your delight. There he is—a ruddy mass, his position at first hard to distinguish. In another moment the stalker grunts with satisfaction. "Eh, he's deid," he says, in brief summary of the situation. The obsequies soon are

performed. "That was a good shot," the stalker says, presently, as you resume your march, leaving the gillie and watcher to pull the deer down the hill to a comparative level, where the pony with the deer saddle can come for him. "It was not a good chance. I thought you had clean missed him." It is characteristic of the stalker's kind and kin to state the case thus bluntly, without regard of your feelings—less characteristic to confess himself, as he thus confesses himself, in the wrong. Generally they will guard themselves with careful art from any such admission, and you will warm to this exceptional man forthwith, in recognition of the integrity of his heart.

Your shot has not gone far to frighten the forest. "We will come up along the ridge again," the stalker proposes, "and look for the other stags." The upward way seems much lightened by the consciousness that you have done well by the stag that is now being pulled down the hill, with the bullet through his heart. You are conscious, too, of an atmosphere of increased respect for you on the stalker's part. That stag was but a seven-pointer, of moderate bulk. Before you still, somewhere, is the eleven-pointer with the fine spread of horns. And now, after faring on along the ridge for a while, you perceive them again—that noble army of stags, of which your seven-pointer was but a poor representative. They are there, but the situation is a very evil one. Between you and the stags are the hinds, in indefinite number. "The meeserable craters," says the stalker with little gallantry, "cover themselves all over the country when there's any stags about." The hinds are between you and the stags, and there is no way of going round, at all feasible, that will not throw the wind right down on to the hinds. "There's a chance," says the stalker, "if the hinds would let us get to yon ridge without taking our wind. Then we might have a chance. It's a long shot, but I think you might manage it." There is the slightest possible emphasis on the "you," which is enough to justify you in regarding the speech as a just compliment to your last shot. Then he pulls out his watch. There are yet some hours of daylight. You decide to give the deer half-an-hour to see what they may do. During that time you spy frequently, and have the joy of seeing amongst the stags that famous beast, the eleven-pointer, which you are beginning to regard as the Monarch of the Glen. At the end of the half-hour's time you decide to chance it—to go on to the ridge and hope the hinds will not catch your wind. It is a chance—not a good one, but the only one. For the rest it is plain sailing. A hundred yards of crouching, fifty yards of hands and knees progress, and five-and-twenty of dragging yourself along like the serpent, and you are there, as near as you can venture. It is not comfortable—you are sitting in a puddle in a granite basin, and screwed up wretchedly. But the eleven-pointer is there. Presently he comes forward, to give you a chance. "I think I'll take him now," you whisper. "Better wait a second; he's no properly square to you," says the master. For a moment the beast looks like showing himself squarely; then he does the worst thing possible for you—he lies down. You groan, and the stalker groans, in comic chorus. There is nothing for it but to wait till he gets up, sitting the while in your cramped attitude in your granite basin of cold water. The hinds are close before you. One has a bad cough that is incessant. The big stag is suspicious, as old stags are apt to be, turning his head constantly. He is 200yds. off, and you consult with your mentor whether to use the 200yds. sight. He recommends the ordinary sight, and you agree. After half-an-hour or so—mercifully no more—the stags begin to move. First some hinds move, then one or two of the lesser stags, and finally the big beast with the good head that you have marked as yours is on his feet, feeding. He is covered at first by another stag—you have to wait, screwed up even less comfortably than ever. Presently he stands clear out against the sky. You aim, allowing a little for the distance, with your 100yds. sight, press the trigger, and the big stag falls like a shot. "Weel done, sir!" the stalker cries with approval. You look about at the other startled deer, that still have not seen you. But then, casting a glance to where your beast had fallen, you see him, to your dismay, on his legs again and disappearing over the ridge after the others, that now have fairly taken the alarm. "He is away!" you tell the stalker, who has his glass on the herd in full retreat. "Eh—is he that?" Presently he says, "I see him—aye, you will have hit him high on the shoulder. They will fall that way when they are hit so. I can see the dark mark on his shoulder. It's a pity; but it was a difficult chance. You will likely have allowed too much for the distance and taken the sight too full."

That is the explanation, no doubt. It is always suspicious when a stag falls thus, immediately. He is often "creased," as in boyish imagination we used to "crease" mustangs.

So he is gone, our eleven-pointer, gone most likely to his own home and nursery, where he will sulk and stay by himself for some time, for the others will prod him with their horns (it is their way with a wounded one of their kind) if he comes among them. The wound will throw him back a fortnight or so, may be, but it will not hurt him. The wound of a grass-feeding animal does not fester. He is none the worse. And if anyone

comes on him thus alone, by himself, without guarding hinds or little stags, he will fall an easy victim, and someone else will have the eleven-pointed head in his hall. *Sunt lacrymæ rerum.* The stag will recover his wounds far sooner than you will his loss.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

SOUTH WINDS AND MIGRANTS.

LAST week, from September 20th to 26th, all the days were warm and sunny, but during the first four the wind remained in the south, while throughout the other three it blew from the north, with effects upon bird-life which clearly showed that migration in season is almost entirely a matter of the wind. While the south wind prevailed, no additions were made to our bird population by migrants from the north, nor did any more of our summer visitors depart. On the other hand, a few fly-catchers, and at least one willow-wren, reappeared in places where they had not been for some time. Turtle-doves reappeared, too, in fields which they had seemingly deserted with the previous week's north wind, and several whinchats were seen again.

THE NORTH WIND'S HINT.

When the wind changed to the north its effect would have been more marked, of course, if the weather had been cold or stormy, because, so long as the days were warm and bright, with plenty of insects in the air, the house-martins saw no reason to hurry southwards, and some, at any rate, of the turtle-doves remained to eat their fill of the grain still lying in many fields. At the same time, however, the fly-catchers and warbler disappeared again; and most of the sand-martins took the hint of the frosty mornings, for their russet backs were rarely visible after the 24th among the assemblage of house-martins on the roofs. More than half of the swallows went, too; and when we recollect how much earlier in the spring these birds came than the house-martins, we can understand that they should have reared their last broods and be ready to depart sooner.

"AS THE CROW FLIES."

At the same time gregarious larks that had come from the North with the wind began to appear in the clover stubbles, looking, as they always do, rather smaller and darker than our resident larks. Curlews and many shore and sea birds multiplied; and every morning, while the north wind blew, rooks and jackdaws came flying high overhead, inland and southwards. From about 9.30 a.m. to noon seems to be the usual time of arrival of migrant crow-birds from the North on the Norfolk Coast, the exact hour being regulated apparently by the force of the wind which brings them; and if one could ascertain at what hour they leave the coast of Lincolnshire, one would be able to calculate the pace at which they travel over the sea. Deducting from this the speed of the wind on given occasions, one would arrive at the average pace of their unassisted flight. I expect, however, that on leaving any coast birds continue to rise higher and higher in the air, until they sight land at an immense distance; and from that point, their flight would be one long descent at great speed—like a cyclist "coasting"—thus accounting for the amazing rates of flight which have been recorded by observers at such places as Heligoland. There the birds have of course sighted the island from a great height and an immense distance; and to register the pace of their arrival as the normal speed of their migrating flight is as ridiculous as it would be to time a coasting cyclist at the bottom of a long hill and then credit him with the power of riding at the rate of fifty miles an hour.

MIGRATING ALOFT.

The fact that birds upon migration fly at a great height was brought home to me once in India, when on a cloudless night the face of the brilliant moon became partially clouded with a sort of film which powerful field-glasses were just able to identify as a great flight of some large cranes or storks which even then seemed scarcely larger than small specks of dust. Perhaps even then these birds were descending from heights even more immense. This habit of rising to a great height in order to view land in the distance is, after all, the natural and inevitable line of action for birds to adopt when they find themselves launched in flight over a wide waste of water; and you may see it practised daily on a small scale ashore by the rooks and gulls which haunt the ploughlands.

PROSPECTING ROOKS.

When the men leave off work for the dinner-hour, or when the gulls and rooks have been disturbed by a suspicious-looking stranger's arrival on the scene with a gun, they almost always rise with circling, drifting flight to a considerable height before some of them catch sight of a promising field for new operations in the distance. These will at once begin to "coast" on spread pinions with an easy flap now and then towards the new field, and all the others will quickly trail off after them, some in the exhilaration of their swift descent ducketing and swooping after each other. Much in the same way migrating birds must glide on the down grade for many miles towards the distant coast which they have perceived upon the horizon, although perhaps they would be too weary and anxious, as a rule, to indulge in any fantastic games of follow-my-leader, like the rooks and gulls ashore.

WHY MIGRANTS ARE RARELY SEEN AT SEA.

This theory of birds' flight, when migrating over sea, explains, too, why they so very rarely are seen at sea, and still more rarely alight on the rigging of ships. To view the opposite coast they must rise so high as to be themselves scarcely visible, if visible at all, to the naked eye of men below; and from their altitude a ship would appear but as a small speck in the waste of waters, and would present none of the features of sand or rock, herbage or trees, which would be associated in the birds' minds with the idea of a resting-place. Sometimes solitary birds, which have been blown by cross winds, perhaps hundreds of miles from their trackless course of migration, alight on ships; and occasionally whole flocks, which have similarly lost their way, will for a few hours blacken all the rigging of some ocean-going vessel; but as a rule the migration takes place out of sight, and is often performed in the hours of darkness.

THE RIDDLE OF THE SWALLOW.

At first sight it seems wonderful that so many birds of different kinds and varied powers of flight should all be able to find their way over seas from land to land at the proper seasons; but when you look at a map, and bear in mind

that it is the cold north wind which compels them to travel south in autumn, and the warm south wind which stirs their pulses with a longing for their northern homes in spring, the wonder disappears. You see that such journeys can hardly go wrong, because the lands by which birds travel are all linked by narrow seas which present little difficulty to their swift wind-aided flight. They can hardly lose their way, because they migrate only when the wind is blowing in the right direction; and by rising to a great height, whence they can view land at an immense distance, they are almost always able to correct any errors of direction which may be caused in so short a sea-passage by variation of the wind.

A SIMPLE HABIT.

It is not to be supposed that any bird of the year—a young cuckoo, for instance, hatched and reared by resident hedge-sparrows—leaves the only home that he has known with the deliberate intention of crossing seas to distant lands. He flies with the first chill winds of early autumn, because to do so is the instinct of his race; and the cold wind takes him always in the right direction. His race has survived in the struggle for existence, because early ancestors accidentally discovered a pleasant land, rich in insects, to spend the summer in, after they had been blown by the south wind in spring over narrow seas. In autumn, when insect life disappeared and the cold north wind blew, they had to fly to find food, and the cold wind quickly brought them to southern lands again.

HOW THE INSTINCT GREW.

Thus they prospered; and the tendency to fly with the right wind at the proper season became a fixed instinct, not only of the cuckoos, but of every other kind of bird whose ancestors had met with a similar lucky accident. Perhaps quite as many birds were in the first instance carried accidentally by strong west winds out to sea from the west coasts of Europe and Africa (as some are still every year); but these birds either saved their lives by laboriously struggling back against the wind, or perished miserably. In either case they gained no advantage for their race, and laid the foundation for no future instinct; whereas every bird which made the north-and-south journey gained a safe and pleasant breeding home as well as a safe and pleasant winter residence, avoiding the heat and drought, the snakes and predaceous vermin of the South in summer, and the hunger and cold of the North in winter. Naturally the descendants of such birds prospered and multiplied in proportion as they inherited and improved upon their ancestors' fortunate discovery, until to-day we see that each migrant species has its stereotyped instinct to seize the opportunity of wind and weather which suits it best. We need admire the coming and going of the swallows no less because we understand how easy their journeys are and how simply the habit of travel arose. E. K. R.

DEVON & SOMERSET STAGHOUNDS.

THE "forest week" is becoming an institution on Exmoor, and everyone looks forward to it throughout the season. The forest of Exmoor is a wild treeless waste of swampy sedgy grass, surrounded by a wide expanse of heathery commons, and here the red deer have increased and multiplied, even more than in other parts of Somerset and Devon, where four packs of hounds now hunt the wild red deer.

With a view of scattering as well as reducing the herd on Exmoor, it has now become customary for the Devon and Somerset hounds, the parent pack, to ask the assistance of the younger packs; consequently last week, in addition to four days with the Devon and Somerset, we had a day with Mr. Stanley's Quantock Staghounds, and a day with the hounds from the Tiverton district, of which Sir John Heathcote Amory is Master, and his son, Mr. Ian Amory, huntsman, his whips being the well-known polo players, Mr. A. and Mr. C. de Las Casas. On Monday we found a good stag lying in the open on Anstey Common; we found two good stags, in fact, but the pack was laid on one, and we had a very merry spin through rain and fog over the heathery ridges of Anstey and Venford to the big coverts in the Barle Valley. Hounds never faltered on the line for an instant, and mile after mile they pushed the stag through the oak scrub towards Dulverton and then away over the enclosed country to the valley of the Exe. It was hard to keep to hounds through the fog, and the pace was very severe; but at length this good stag was brought to bay in the Exe, just below the point where Exe and Barle join, and after a severe struggle, in which he injured several hounds, he was taken and killed.

On Tuesday Mr. Stanley brought his hounds to Carkbarrow, on a morning

when the weather could only be described as "awful." Rain and fog lasted till mid-day. A stag was after a long time compelled to seek the open from Lord Lovelace's coverts above Culbone. Nine other stags went away at almost the same moment, and created some confusion, but the pack settled to the right line, and we had a capital gallop over the open moor to Acmead and Alderman's Barrow, and thence to Dunkery Beacon. In the Horner coverts deer were so numerous as to baffle all Mr. Stanley's efforts.

On Wednesday the Devon and Somerset met at Culbone Stables, and soon found a stag, which led them a merry dance over North Common to the Oare Valley and down beside the water part to Oare and Brendon, when he turned up the steep hill to Countisbury, and after a sharp gallop over Countisbury Common went down the precipitous slopes, which fall a thousand feet to the rocks on which the waves of the Atlantic break. Here the stag went to sea and swam a long distance, and the few sportsmen who went down to the beach had several hours' walking and climbing before the hounds brought their stag to bay.

On Thursday the Devon and Somerset met at Cloutsham, and singling a heavy stag out of twenty-two lying in a small gorse called Sweet Tree on the side of Dunkery, drove him over the moor. For over half-an-hour hounds raced with their stag scarcely out of view, for he lay down when tufers were stopped and jumped up in view of the pack. It was a severe trial to horses, as the moor was very heavy and the combs many and steep. Coming into the Porlock Woods the horses got a short much needed respite, and then an hour's woodland hunting ere the stag broke at the lower side of the covert for the sea, where he was taken and killed.

Sir John Amory's hounds were at Larkbarrow on Friday, and treated us to a rare gallop. The stag was found on Mr. Nicholas Snow's coverts, and went away at once to the softest wettest part of Exmoor known as Pinford. Hounds were soon on his line, and a fine run ensued over the best going on Exmoor to Southern Wood. Here the stag, a very old heavy deer, had soiled in Brendon Water, and went away down the valley with the pack close to him. Eventually he was taken in a pool a little above the well-known spot in the Lyn called Watersmeet.

On Saturday Mr. Luttrell's coverts, near Dunster, were drawn, when a number of fine stags were found, one of which was brought to hand after a very sporting run.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GUN-SHY DOGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am a regular reader of your paper, and notice several letters *re* above. Some time ago I cured a gun-shy wavy retriever twelve months old by fastening her up about 40yds. from the shooters and leaving her for a whole afternoon during range practice—a Volunteer range, used chiefly on Saturdays. The next Saturday I put her about 20yds. from the shooters for some time, and then took her as near as I could without being in the way. Three afternoons cured her. I did not stop with her the whole time. If this be tried I think it important to be fully 40yds. away for the first time.—WALTER THOM, Whitchurch, Salop.

A CURIOUS SHOOTING INCIDENT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A very curious incident occurred here the other day. A friend of mine was out shootin', and shot an old blackcock. She towered to 50yds. or 60yds. high, and then fell on to a grouse which must have been lying in the heather. The grouse seemed quite stunned at first, and went round and round flapping its wings, and then flew away, apparently none the worse.—BLACKCOCK, Bellingham, Northumberland.

A GROUSE STORY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

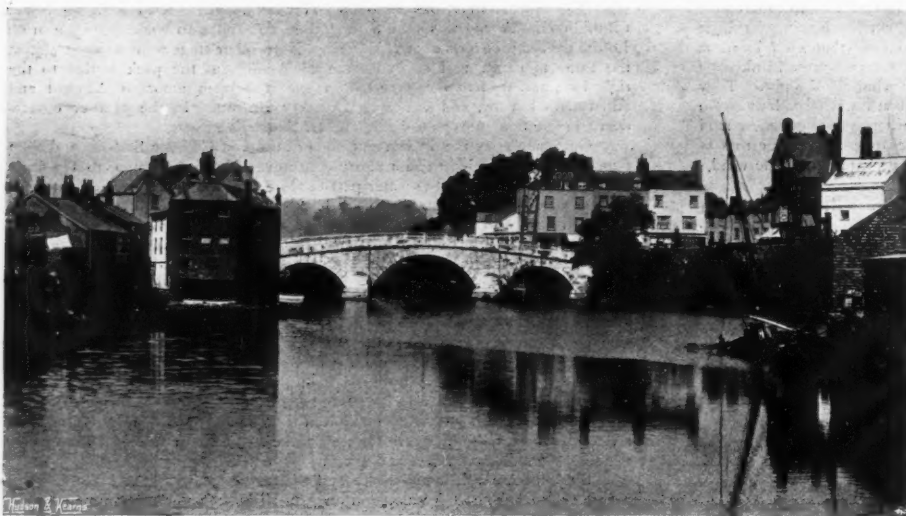
SIR,—As I have never before heard of a really wild grouse showing an inclination for human society, I venture to send a photograph and an account of a curious case which occurred in this neighbourhood. It may interest some of your readers. The bird in question is an old cock grouse in fine plumage and very healthy. He was first noticed last January, during a severe snow-storm, near a farmhouse on the edge of a moor at Solaryie, in Perthshire. He began by following the manager's children on their way to school, going with them across the fields to the banks of a small stream, where he waited for their return, and accompanied them home. In April he found a mate; a nest was made and eggs were laid, but mate and nest came to grief, and the old bird remained alone, never seeking the companionship of his own kind, but consoling himself with the society of the children, with whom he would play for hours, chasing them, alighting on their shoulders and heads, and pecking at their bonnets, but absolutely refusing to eat any grain offered to him, though various kinds were tried. He seems to bear a charmed life, for in the midst of constant shooting he has hitherto escaped serious injury. A stray pellet must have touched him, for one leg hung helpless for a time when he rose in flight. That seems to have recovered, but to the inconsolable grief of his little playmates, he has become much wilder, and though he is often seen and answers with his "Go back, go back" when they call him, he no longer follows them or allows himself to be touched. The authenticity of this account can be vouched for by various witnesses who have watched the grouse at play with the children from a little distance.—M. V. CONSTABLE, Blairgowrie, N.B.

THE SUGGESTED PLANS FOR SONNING BRIDGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In looking over the very pleasing sketch plan for restoring Sonning Bridge, from the suggestions of Mr. Lutyns, in COUNTRY LIFE, it is impossible not to concur in your regret that the County Council has not seen fit to allow its





iron-latticed alternative to appear beside it. The suggestion of Mr. Lutyens is so entirely in keeping with the site that if and when the Oxfordshire County Council publish their design, it might be as well to obtain some idea of the respective cost of the two. Mr. Lutyens' design is, if anything, an improvement on the appearance of the present wooden bridge, for it gives a better line of lower supports by substituting arches for straight planks of timber. It would make the whole series of causeways a unique ornament to the river.—IRIS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am troubling you with a cutting from a local paper to show that the destruction has begun, but trust that even yet your efforts—which deserve, and have, the sincere gratitude of all lovers of our Thames and its scenery—combined with the protests of the eminent men who are also interesting themselves, will prevail, and stay, at least for the present, the hands of our County Council before another monstrosity and outrage is perpetrated at this beautiful and picturesque spot on the river. Alas, that we have not another Ruskin to denounce these modern and hideous methods of destroying the few beauty spots which remain, and for which, in this case at least, there is no necessity.—THOMAS SALISBURY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—While sympathising with your article on Sonning Bridges, I would ask whether it is not rather hard upon the Local Authorities of Walton-on-Thames to charge them with destroying the old bridge painted by Turner. Was not this bridge swept away by floods in 1859 or 1860?—W. B. GURDON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—All lovers of our river will commend your action re Sonning Bridge. We have already lost too many of the beautiful old bridges that adorned the Thames. As matters stand, there is no safeguard for such as remain, and what happens at Sonning to-day may be repeated to-morrow at New Bridge, Lechlade, or any of the crossings above Oxford, which are less known to frequenters of the Thames. The final decision in such matters should not rest with a body possibly actuated entirely by utilitarian motives. In the event of the Oxfordshire County Council persisting in the destruction of Sonning Bridge, I would suggest that the structure replacing it should be designated—PONAS ASINORUM.

AN ANCIENT BRIDGE PRESERVED.—HAMPSHIRE SAVES WHAT OXFORDSHIRE DESTROYS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you herewith the drawings of Mr. W. J. Taylor, County Surveyor of Hampshire, showing the manner in which the picturesque Quartleys Bridge, which spans the Avon at Christchurch, near Bournemouth, has been treated. This bridge dates from the fifteenth century, and in view of the increasing traffic it was recently found necessary to strengthen and to widen it. There were some who considered that it would be well to replace this ancient bridge with an "elegant iron structure," but the Hampshire County Council have dealt with it in the manner shown in the accompanying drawings. The widening was carried out by taking down the northern frontage of the bridge, widening the piers and roadway, and replacing the frontage stone by stone. Thus, while the bridge has been rendered serviceable for heavy and increasing traffic, its interest and its architectural features remain unaltered. The cost incurred was £2,247.—HANTONENSIS.

[Nothing could be better than the action of the County Council of Hampshire in this matter. It is so complete a contrast, both in feeling and fact, to that of the Oxfordshire County Council in the case of Sonning Bridge, that we regret much not to be able to find space for a complete plan of the way in which the difficulty has been met. The bridge, which will be familiar to many salmon and trout fishermen, has five arches, under which runs the famous salmon river, down to Christchurch Harbour. The bridge is not only beautiful in itself, but forms part of the architectural association for which Christchurch is so famous. The character of the bridge is entirely preserved by the sensible and careful alterations designed by the surveyor, who has set a good example to county surveyors throughout the kingdom.—ED.]

EXETER BRIDGE THREATENED.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with great interest the correspondence and articles relating to the destruction or preservation of ancient bridges. You will hear with regret that it is proposed to pull down and replace the fine old bridge over the Exe,

which, though it is rather inconvenient from the curve at which it rises at the bottom of one of the main streets, is a fine example of the bridge of its time. It would be a great disfigurement to the city if it were replaced by an ugly iron structure. Probably if attention is drawn to it in time the county authorities may be able to devise some means for widening it without spoiling its appearance, as was done so successfully by the Oxford authorities at Magdalen Bridge.—DEVON.

[The accompanying illustration is reproduced from a photograph by Messrs. Valentine and Sons.—ED.]

TOWERING PARTRIDGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may interest some of your readers to hear of a curious incident that took place while partridge shooting in Northamptonshire last week. While walking through a field of clover a covey of birds rose, and I fired at one which after flying about 50 yds. towered. We expected to see the bird fall in the usual way, when, much to our surprise, it hovered in the air and came back high over the line of guns, and then fell in a slanting direction towards me, so that by reaching out my hand I caught the bird, at as it was not quite dead it slipped from my grasp. We found it was shot through the head and not through the lungs. In your last week's issue I am sorry to see such bad accounts of partridge shooting in many parts of the country. The birds appear to have done fairly well in our district, some of the coveys being very large, and all the birds well grown and strong on the wing. Our first day's bag, shooting over about 600 acres with seven guns, consisted of fifty-nine brace of birds, forty-two hares, twenty-eight rabbits, and one hare trail. The last sixteen brace of birds were killed by five guns in a field of clover in less than an hour.—C. B. J.

AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It was with pleasure that I saw in your issue of September 20th an appreciation of the fact that hope for the future of agriculture in this country lies in co-operative methods. After the speech of Mr. Hanbury at the annual meeting of the Agricultural Organisation Society held last spring, I think that we may take this for granted. That same speech also told us that the Minister for Agriculture believes that in this society we have a body ready and able to do the work that is required. Hard work it is and rather costly, but unless we have a central body to guide and unite us, even if we co-operate we shall have a series of disjointed efforts. Unless we have union of the societies, we shall not win the battle that is on us. I think if people recognised that agricultural co-operation means that farmers should control the trade that depends on their crops, and that they do so, with full liberty themselves, in the ordinary business way, then those who have would be more ready to help on the work. Unless the Agricultural Organisation Society gets more income we shall have to go on waiting, but if the well-wishers of our rural districts would enquire and see what the Agricultural Organisation Society is doing, they would find that their subscriptions which are so much wanted would also be the means of enabling much good work to be done.—G. F. E.

TAKEN TO THE WATER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed snap-shot was taken by me at Saunton, a small seaside resort on the North Devon coast. The Barnstaple Stag-hounds met on Saturday week at Heddon Mills, about seven miles from here, and ran the stag for about two hours, when he arrived at Saunton Down End, which is a mile and a-half from Saunton, and took to the sea and swam out, as far as one could estimate, about three miles, then he turned towards land. The "shot" is of the stag resting on the first rock. He was eventually lassoed, dragged in, and despatched.—F. H. TOLLER, Newport, Barnstaple.

